The Complete Sacred Music of Nicolò Isouard (1773 – 1818) and Maltese Sacred Music for The Order of Malta in the Late Eighteenth Century.

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To Whom it May Concern

This is to certify that the thesis and music editions presented by me for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy comprises only my original work except where due acknowledgment is made in the text to all other material used.

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Abstract.

Nicolò Isouard (1773-1818) is considered Malta's national composer. After studies in France and Naples, he returned to his homeland, where from 1794 to 1798 he was an aspiring composer, and employee of the Order of Malta. In 1994 a collection of thirty-three autographs of hitherto unknown sacred music by Isouard appeared at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and I recognised the importance of these manuscripts. My intentions are to provide a précis on the Order, as the sovereign entity ruling Malta at the time, and the sacred music composed for them in their great Conventual Church in Valletta – now St John's Co-Cathedral. The thesis will provide the background to Isouard's early career and a complete edition and commentary of all of his sacred music, including additional works found during the research process, and a catalogue of his stage works.

Dedication.

Without any reservation and with great admiration, I dedicate this thesis and set of editions to my two supervisors, Rev Professor Gerald O'Collins SJ AC, and Professor John Griffiths (Oficial de la Orden de Isabel la Católica), and to the treasured custodian of Malta's musical heritage, Dun Gwann Azzopardi, as well as to that special group of Maltese scholars, historians, musicians and custodians of the musical and artistic heritage of Malta and the Order of Malta, whose dedication, achievement and friendship I respect so much.

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Finally but definitely not least, my thanks to my mentor, the Hon Sir James Gobbo AC CVO, for suggesting that I undertake this degree, one that would bring me into closer working contact with some eminent theologians, and to Allan and Maria Myers AO, without whose support and encouragement this project would have proven impossible to undertake.

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4. A CD of performances of works by Michel' Angelo Vella, Tommaso Prota, Girolamo Abos, and Francesco Azopardi, conducted by Richard Divall. Melbourne July 11, 2013.

Abbreviations.

Manuscript Sources.

AAM Archivum Archiepiscopale Melitensis
ACM Archivum Cathedralis Melitensis
ACosp Archivum Cospicua
ACEM Archivum Curiae Episcopalis Melitensis
AIM Archivum Inquisitionis Melitensis
AOM Archivum Ordinis Sancti Johannis, Melitae
AOMR Archivum Ordinis Sancti Johannis, Rome
ASV Archivum Secretum Vaticanum
BAV Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana
CEM Curia Episcopalis Melitensis
FBN Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris
FPO Bibliothèque, Archives et Musée de L'Opéra de Paris
NLM National Library of Malta
PA Parish Archives
STJG St John's Gate, Clerkenwell, London

AC Acta Curiae
AO Acta Originalia
AV Apostolic Visit
DC Dusina Report. Copy C at AAM
DV Dusina Report. Copy at ASV
BG Giuliana dei Benefici di Gozo
LB Liber Baptizatorum
LD Liber Defunctorum
LM Liber Mortuorum
LMatr. Liber Matrimoniorum
Mandati ACM, Mandati
V Pastoral Visit

Bibliography.

AM *Archivum Melitense*
AS Mal *Archivio Storico di Malta*
Ed. /ed. Editor/Editors
JFA *Journal of the Faculty of Arts*, University of Malta
MH *Melita Historica*
MS I *Melita Sacra* . Vol. I written by Mons Vincent Borg
MS II *Melita Sacra*, Vol II written by Mons Vincent Borg
n.s. new series
n.d. Year of publication unknown
n.p. No publisher known.
n.pag. No pagination

Place-Names Wettinger, Godfrey, *Place Names of the Maltese Islands ca 1300-1800*

Musical terms.

A Alto, contralto
ant. Antiphon
archi strings
B Bass
Bc basso continuo
cant. canticle
canz. canzonetta
cb contrabasso
cemb. cembalo
cl clarinetto
conc. concertato
cor corno
fag fagotto
fl flauto
madr. madrigal
mot. motet
MS/ms manuscript
ob oboe
obl. obligato
off. offertory
org organ
Ps. psalm
resp. responsory
rip. ripieno
S soprano/canto
seq. sequence
T tenor
tr tromba
vln violin
vla viola
vc violoncello
vlta violetta

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Lithograph by Charles Motte 1785 – 1836.

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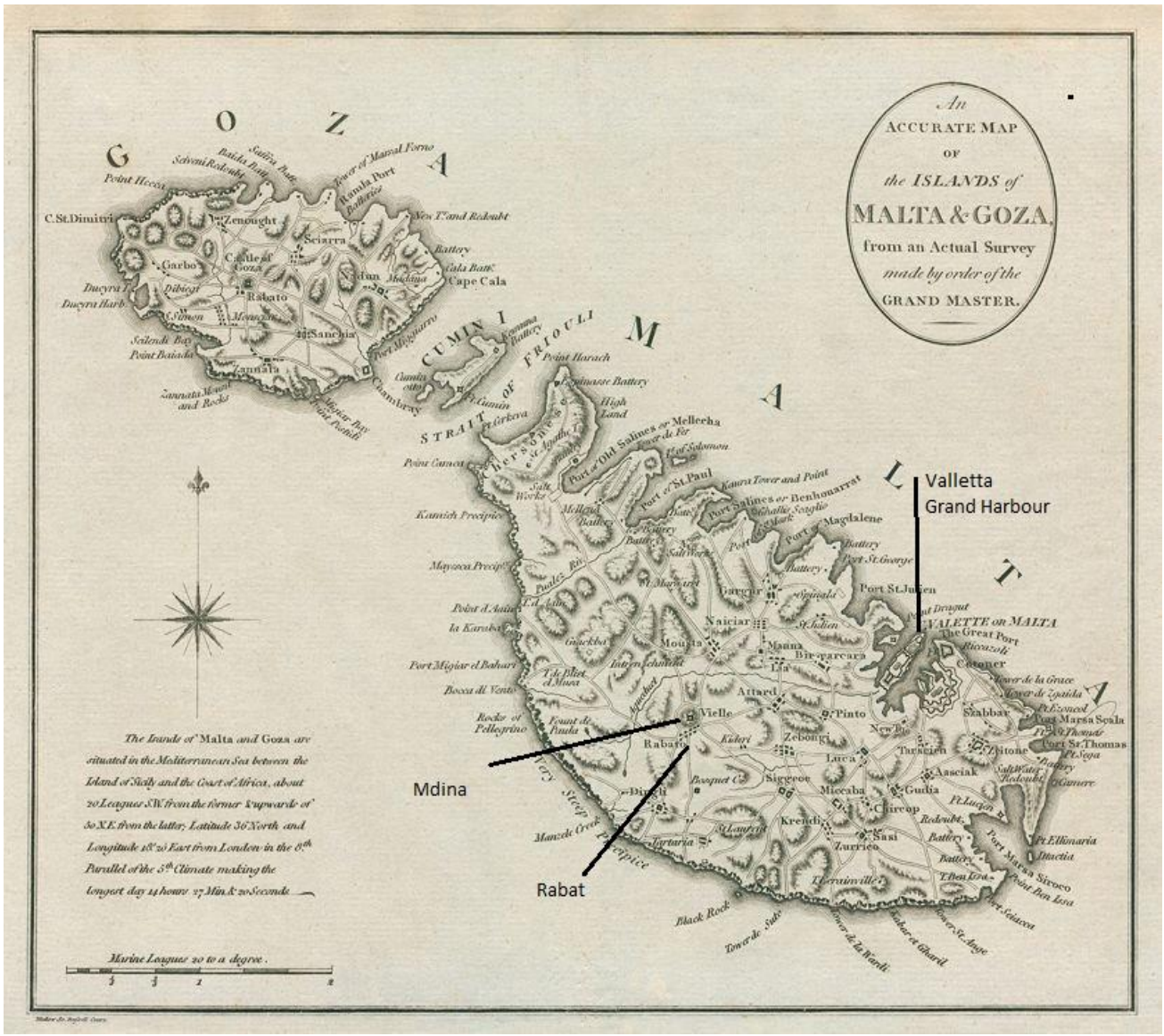
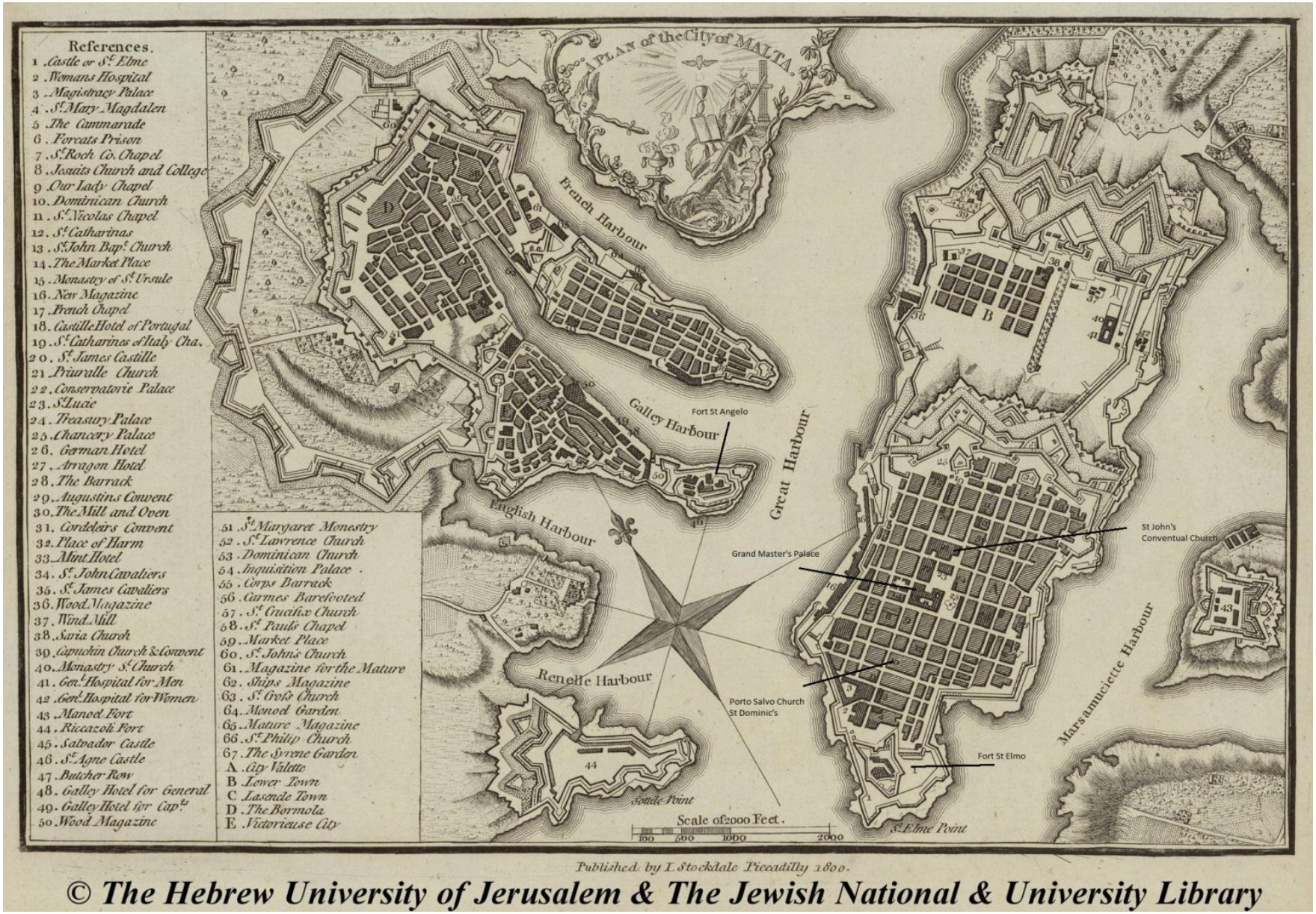


3. The Islands of Malta, Gozo and Comino.



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4. Map of Valletta and the Two Cities of Birgu/Cospicua and Senglea.

Chapter One.

The Knights of Malta and Music on Malta.

'Soliman envoie le basha Mustapha assiéger Malte.
Rien n'est plus connu que la siège où la fortune de Soliman échoua'.[1]

Introduction.

Nicolò Isouard (1773-1818) is considered Malta's national composer. Isouard's early career began on the Island of Malta, when after studies in France and Naples, he returned to his homeland.[2] He later went on to have a celebrated operatic career in France. But, from 1794 to 1798 he was an aspiring composer, and employee of the Order of Malta, who then ruled the islands, and for whom in anticipation of promotion, he composed a portfolio of some thirty-five sacred works. The manuscripts of this music, set to various sacred texts, had been taken by the composer to France in 1800, but do not appear amongst his effects and scores itemised after his death.[3] In 1994 the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris acquired most of these manuscripts, and they were brought to public notice by Professor Alain Blondy of the Sorbonne, by the music historian Joseph Vella Bondin, and the Maltese historian Dun Gwann Azzopardi, who introduced me to them. I recognised the importance of this collection, most of which had presumably never been performed. Nicolò Isouard and his

[1] Voltaire (François-Marie Arouet), *Annales de L'Empire depuis Charlemagne* (Geneva: 1777). The quotation is generally rendered as 'Nothing is more well known as the Siege of Malta'. The philosopher admired the Order and some of its members. In his correspondence with Nicolas Thierot, Voltaire speaks highly of the *Bailli* Louis-Gabriel de Froullay (1694-1766), and his good friend the Chevalier Blaise-Marie Daydie (1692-1761). He writes, of 'these two illustrious Knights without fear and without reproach', and adds, 'How proud I am to have as my protectors, the two most virtuous men of the Kingdom'. The *Bailli* du Froullay, and a close friend of the First Minister, Cardinal Fleury was introduced to Voltaire when he was quite a young man. The *Bailli* was general of the Galleys on Malta from 1730 and was appointed as Ambassador of the Order to the Court of Louis XV in 1741.

[2] Malta consists of three islands, Malta, Gozo to the north, and the small Comino.

[3] Paris, Archives Nationales, M C/Et. LXII, n. 825. The manuscript, dated 6 April 1818 is signed by seven witnesses; including the publisher Charles (Karl) Bochsa, *père,* whose son - the great harpist, Nicholas Charles Bochsa, died in Sydney in 1856, and is buried in Newtown cemetery.

sacred music, along with music on Malta under the Order of Malta, provide the core focus of this thesis.

My intentions in this first chapter are twofold. The first is to provide a background of the Order of Malta, as a religious order, and as the sovereign entity ruling Malta at the time. As Nicolò Isouard's employer, the Order played a crucial role in his early life and in his development as a composer. During the only period of his brief life when Isouard worked on Malta, the Order provided him with sympathetic patronage and employment. This period, from 1794 to 1798, was primarily devoted to the composition and performance of sacred music for the Order in their great Conventual Church in Valletta – now St John's Co-Cathedral. Apart from his Requiem, these years were the only time in Isouard's career that he wrote music for the church. Leaving Malta in 1800 he took a new career path, in composing for the lyric theatre, and except for his orchestration of Nicolò Jommelli's *Missa Pro Defunctorum* would never again write any music of a religious nature, or set to music any religious texts. This is a revealing aspect about Isouard, the man, and his personal frailties, but it is indicative of the composer's desire to work, and indeed succeed in a milieu that was really sympathetic to his artistic temperament. Second, I will provide some background to music on Malta, before the time of Isouard, and in relation to religious music composed for the Order. Very little has been written about this area, or about the composer's early life and career. Apart from two short excerpts by Guglielmi and Le Pin, none of the music presented in this edition of Isouard's complete sacred music, like most of the music excerpts from works of his teachers, has ever been published before.

Part One.

The Order of St. John and Malta – A Brief Introduction.

The Foundation and History of the Order.

Historical works devoted to the Order of Malta, the Knights of St John, or the Hospitallers, as they were better known in mediaeval times, are voluminous. But over the past twenty years, Hospitaller studies have become increasingly diversified and specialised. It is not my intention to provide a detailed history of this 900-year-old Order. Rather, my purpose is to provide some necessary - and at times unusual background material - of the history of the Order and the Maltese Church, especially in their role as patrons of sacred music on the islands of Malta (Malta, Gozo and Comino). This will support the story of their musical employee, Nicolò Isouard.

The Holy Land and Cyprus. 1060-1309.

The Order of Malta, or to give it its full and official title, the 'Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of St John, of Rhodes and of Malta', is the third oldest of the Religious Orders of the Roman Catholic Church, coming after the Augustinians and the Benedictines. Apart from the Holy See, it is the only institution of the Church to be a Sovereign Entity in International law. A Lay Religious Order, today as in the past, it has its own Priests and Knights of Justice - who, titled as *Frà* or *Frater,* are in solemn religious profession. There are also two other grades of lay members (both Knights and Dames), first, those who take a religious Vow of Obedience, and second, those in 'third class vows', such as *Grazia Magistrale*, or Magistral Grace. From the twelfth century, Sisters or *Sorores* were part of the Order, and their monasteries spread throughout Europe.[4] There are still convents of Sisters who wear the Maltese cross of the Order in Spain and Malta, and although descended from

[4] The Convent of Sisters at Sigena in Spain was established in 1187 by Queen Sancha of Aragón. See Jochen Burgtorf, *The Central Convent of Hospitallers and Templars – History, Organization and Personnel 1099/1120-1310* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2008), 77-8. In this magisterial study, Burgtorf analyses every mention of a Hospitaller from the foundation of the Order to its translation to Rhodes in 1310. Also see Anthony Luttrell and Helen Nicholson, *Hospitaller Women in the Middle Ages* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2006).

the Order, for reason of Canon Law, are now attached to other Orders, such as the Ursulines.[5]

The Order is the direct descendant of a hospice, attached to the Church of St Mary of the Latins, which was founded in Jerusalem around 1060-61 by the family of the Amalfitan Count (*Comites*) Mauro (*Maurus*).[6] Maurus, who died around 1070, had a large family and one wealthy son, Pantaleo, and had widespread commercial contacts with both Egypt and Constantinople.[7] This is not unusual, as contemporary records cite commercial activity in Egypt, by merchants from Amalfi as early as 980 AD. The hospice in Jerusalem was dedicated to the patronage of St John the Baptist.[8] In context it might be surprising that the main physicians in the Levant were actually orthodox Christian and not Jewish or Islamic.[9] This first hospice was followed by the establishment of a hospice for women, and later by a large hospital or *Xenodochium* for men.[10] At the time of the First Crusade it was under the

[5] Fr George Aquilina, *The Jerosolimitan Nuns – The Church and Monastery of Saint Ursula Valletta – Malta* (Malta: MIOCS, 2004 in Maltese, 2011 in English).

[6] Comitemauronis family. External relations of Amalfi with the pre-crusade world of Islam are best covered in A. O. Citarella 'The relations of Amalfi with the Arab world before the crusades', *Speculum*, 42 (1967), 299-312. The brief history of the mercantile Amalfitan city state is recorded in Patricia Skinner's recent study, *Medieval Amalfi and its Diaspora, 800-1250* (Oxford: OUP, 2013). Maurus himself entered into the monastic community in Montecassino in old age, during the time of the Abbot Desiderius (later Pope Victor III), and it is possible that the chronicler Amatus (Aymé) of Montecassino, and author of the *History of the Normans,* conversed with him. Skinner, 219. Recently published documents from the Cairo *Genizah* highlight the fact that merchants from Amalfi were most important for that Jewish community, and that it was a normal practice for Amalfitan traders to spend the winter in the Levant between voyages. Skinner, 110, n. 163.

[7] Alain Beltjens, *Aux Origines de L'Ordre de Malte* (Brussels: privately printed by the author, 1995), 8. The 'noble' Maurus had six sons and is recorded as being 'pious, wealthy and generous'. According to Amatus of Montecassino, he was also a benefactor to the Benedictine Monastery of Montecassino in 1065, contributing to the embellishment and the doors of the abbey basilica. It is known that Maurus' son, Pantaleo, was active in Constantinople from around 1060. There are records of an early hospice or *bīmāristān* in Jerusalem that was noted by the Persian administrator and pilgrim, Nāser-e Khosraw, in 1047AD, which mentions that the resident physicians were on a regular salary.

[8] Early references and historians suggest that it might have been St John the Almoner, but this is not the case. Rudolf Hiestand in his 'Die Anfänge der Johanitter' in J. Leckenstein and M. Hellmann (eds), *Die Geistlichen Ritterorders Europa* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1980), writes that there is really no documentary material supporting that claim. See Dane Munro, 'On the Patronage of the Order', *Journal of the Monastic Military Orders*, 2, (2009): 13-20. Munro carefully analyses the possible reasons for the choice or adoption of their Patron, Saint John the Baptist, by the Hospitallers. The city of Benevento, from 1053 a papal enclave in the vicinity of Amalfi, had a hospital under the patronage of St John the Baptist. Skinner, 198 n. 82

[9] Al-Muquddasī, *The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions (Ashan al Taqāsīm fi Ma'rifat al-Aqālīm),* trans. B. Collins (Reading: International Specialized Book Service Inc., 2001), 153.

[10] Piers Mitchell, *Medicine in the Crusades: Warfare, Wounds and the Medieval Surgeon* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004). H.J.A. Sire, *The Knights of Malta* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994).

direction of a monk, *Gerardus*, or *Geraldus,* who was possibly born at Scala, then an episcopal see in Amalfitan territory.[11]

In the Papal Bull *Pie Postulatio Voluntatis*, of 15 February 1113, granting independence to the Hospital of St John by Pope Paschal II, the rector or community leader was referred to as either *Geraldo* or *Geraudus*.[12] Other documents and charters preceded this *Bulla*, and while it is not the foundation document of the Hospitallers, it is a charter granting recognition of the Order as both an exempt and an integral part of the Roman Catholic Church - placing it directly under papal protection.[13] By the time of the Blessed Gerard's death on 3 September 1120, the Order had expanded considerably, and European rulers and returning crusader pilgrims donated properties to it, stretching from Norway to Spain and from Ireland to Hungary.[14] Immediately after his death, Gerard was given the title of 'Blessed' by the papacy, and at a time before the regular process of canonisation, he was venerated as the founder of the Order.[15] In recognition of its Amalfitan heritage, the Order adopted the eight pointed cross of the Republic of Amalfi as the symbol of its hospitaller works.[16]

The Order's great hospital in Jerusalem received much notice from pilgrim writers of the time, and recent studies on the site, and its surviving architecture, have been made by authorities such as Benjamin Kedar and Denys Pringle.[17] Hospitals and hospices of the Order

[11] Burgtorf, 39 and Beltjens, 102. The name variously appears in documents as *Geraldus, Giraldus, Girardus* and *Geraudus*. In modern texts and in the Prayers of the Order he is referred to as 'The Blessed Gerard'.

[12] Maroma Camilleri, 'The Pie Postulatio Voluntatis Papal Bull of 1113: A Diplomatic and Palaeographical Commentary', in *Melitensium Amor – Festschrift in honour of Dun Gwann Azzopardi*, ed. Toni Cortis, Thomas Freller and Lino Bugeja (Malta: privately printed by Gutenberg Press, 2002). The Papal Bull is held in the Archives of the Order of Malta in the National Library of Malta, in Valletta, catalogued as AOM 6. Camilleri, 33, and Beltjens, 437.

[13] Camilleri, 17. The Order's 'exempt' status was confirmed in 1154 in the Papal Bull *Christiane fidei religio* by Pope Anastasius IV (formerly Conrad of Rome). Beltjens, 382-384 and extracts of the Latin text, 455-458.

[14] *Prayers of the Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of Malta* (London: BASMOM, 1991), 333. On this Master's tombstone his name is cited *as Girardus*. The inscription is recorded in one single manuscript (Cambridge University, No. 1786), of Fulcher of Chartres, in his *Historia Hierosolymitana Gesta Francorum ab anno Domini MXCV usque ad annum MCXXVII,* R.H.C. III, 446.

[15] With the impending collapse of Latin rule in the *Outremer*, the Order transferred precious relics as well as thousands of charters and even the founder's relics to St. Gilles and Manosque, in Provence. The relic of the skull of the Blessed Gerard is today venerated in the Monastery of St Ursula in Valletta.

[16] The flag of Amalfi is still the eight pointed (Maltese) cross, in white on a blue background. Today the hospitaller flag of the Order is of a white Maltese cross on a red background. The national flag of the Order is of a white Cross of St John the Baptist on a red background.

[17] Benjamin Kedar, 'A Note on Jerusalem's Bīmāristān and Jerusalem's Hospital', in *The Hospitallers, the Mediterranean and Europe – Festschrift for Anthony Luttrell.* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 7-12. Denys

also existed in Constantinople, Antioch, in Italy and in southern France, especially around St Gilles.[18] Although the Order followed the Liturgy of the Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, it was not placed under the jurisdiction of the Latin Patriarch of that city.[19] With properties and fortifications in all of the crusader principalities of the Latin East, such as Edessa (before 1144), Antioch (to 1268), Tripoli and the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the Order found itself drawn into the defence of these places.[20] A gradual militarisation began, possibly as early as the middle period of the rule of the second Master of the Order, Raymond du Puy (d.1160), and with certainty, under the rule of Master Gilbert d'Assailly.[21] The capture of Jerusalem in 1187 by the *Ayyūbid* sultan, Saladin, meant that the Order retreated with its hospitals to their new convent headquarters in Acre (modern Akko in Israel).[22] Even as the Order became more knightly or chivalric in its membership, one revolutionary aspect of its treatment of the *Malades* was to refer to and serve them as 'Our Lords the Sick', a policy that is still observed. The large Hospitaller compound in Acre has been recently excavated by the Israel Archaeological Survey. Together with the Order of the Temple, the Hospitallers made a significant contribution to both the support and the defence of the Latin East. But with the gradual fall of Antioch, Tripoli and finally Acre in 1291, their remnants, together with the surviving populations were forced to flee to the Kingdom of Cyprus, then ruled by the French Latin Dynasty, the Lusignan family.[23]

Pringle, *Secular Buildings in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem – An Archaeological Gazetteer* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 55-56. Photographs of various sections of this hospital exist from the 1890's, and today parts of the building that were not demolished are incorporated into covered markets that surround the *Bīmāristān* site.

[18] The Order's *Xenodochium* and the Church of St Maria Amalphitanorum in Constantinople, was also founded by the Amalfitan family of Mauro or more likely Pantaleo, and was later sacked in the anti-Latin riots before the Fourth Crusade, in April 1182.

[19] Cristina Dondi, *The Liturgy of the Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem – A Study and a Catalogue of the Manuscript Sources* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2004).

[20] George Gregory Buttigieg, 'The Healing Brothers to "Fratres Equites et Armigerentes" – The evolution of the Hospitaller Military arm in the Latin Kingdom', *Journal of the Monastic Military Orders*, 2, (2009): 71-84.

[21] The fifth Master of the Order, D'Assailly died in 1169/70. Sire, 6, cites an Aragonese charter of 1130 referring to Hospitallers as *cum suis armigeris*. Even prior to this, a charter dated 17 January 1126 gives the names of six hospitallers, one of whom bears the title of constable, a clear reference to a military rank. Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders 1095-1131* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 163, and Buttigieg, 73.

[22] Sultan Saladin or Şalāh al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Ayyūb, (ca. 1138-1193).

[23] The Lusignan dynasty on Cyprus was founded by Guy de Lusignan in 1191, and the last Lusignan monarch on Cyprus was Queen Catherine Cornaro, the widow of King James III of Cyprus (d. 1474). Catherine abdicated her title and ceded the kingdom to the Republic of Venice in 1489.

Under its newly elected Master Foulques de Villaret, in 1306 the Order made a strategic policy decision of moving into naval activities, both in vessels of war and merchant shipping, and began the gradual occupation of most of the Dodecanese Islands, including Cos, Leros, and Rhodes - the latter being eventually captured from Greek renegades in 1309.[24] The accusations and depredations against the Order of the Temple by King Phillip IV of France, which led to the abolition of that Order in 1312 by Pope Clement V, were not lost on the high officials of the Order of St John - or as they became known, the Knights of Rhodes. Hearing of the execution in Paris of fifty-four of the knights of the Temple on 12 May 1310, and later of its Master, Jacques de Molay on 18 March 1314, the Hospitallers determined not to make the same mistakes.[25] Accordingly, the Convent of the Order remained in the Latin East on Rhodes until 1522/3, where it retained its position as defender of the Christian eastern Mediterranean, as well as maintaining hospices and hospitals there, along with those throughout Europe.[26] It was a move that ensured the long term survival of the Order.

Rhodes. 1309-1522/3.

From this Rhodian period onwards, the Order assumed a sovereign status in its dealings with European rulers, and the various Priors of the Order based throughout Europe played important roles in European diplomacy.[27] The absolute sovereignty of the Order in the Dodecanese was illustrated by the minting of coinage in the Order's name, commencing around 1319, in the rule of Frà Elion de Villeneuve.[28] In most European countries, the Grand

[24] Sire, 27-29. The Order also built the large castle of Bodrum, on the Turkish mainland, occupied until 1523, and from 1344 to 1402 held the Turkish city of Smyrna (Izmir), on behalf of the Holy See.

[25] In most European states the Hospitallers inherited the properties of the Temple, although there were exceptions in France, on the Iberian Peninsula, where these lands were transferred to Spanish and Portuguese orders, and in Prussia.

[26] The headquarters of the Order was known as the 'Convent' and the Order was termed the 'Religion'.

[27] No authoritative overall history of the Knights on Rhodes has been written. There are various studies by Joseph Delaville le Roulx, especially his *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des Hospitaliers de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem,* Vol. 1-4 (Paris: 1894-1904), and *Les Hospitaliers à Rhodes jusqu'à la mort de Philibert de Naillac 1310-1421* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1913). Also see Eugène Flandin, *Histoire des Chevaliers de Rhodes* (Tours: A. Mame, 1864). The biographies of Pierre D'Aubusson by Fr Dominque Bouhours (1677), and more recently that of Gilles Rossignol (Besançon: Editions La Manufacture, 1991), and the many articles by Anthony Luttrell provide an excellent basis for research. The great humanist and Master of the Order, Frà Juan Fernández de Heredia (1308-1396), and his remarkable literary collection and life are dealt with in *A Lexicon of the 14th Century Manuscripts of Juan Fernández de Heredia* (Madison, WI: Hispanic Seminary of Hispanic Studies, 1984).

[28] Anna Maria Kasdagli, *The Rhodian Coins at the Museum of the Order of Saint John at Clerkenwell* (Athens: Monographs of the Hellenic Numismatic Society, 2002), 17. The first coins minted were *gigliati* and *aspers* in

Priors or Priors of the Order were major figures in society, and were often used by rulers in administrative roles. Up until 1540, when the English Reformation intervened, the Prior of England was often an important member of the English government, and was officially regarded as one of the chief notables of the Kingdom.[29]

On occupying the city of Rhodes, the Order commenced construction of fortifications, churches and of the most essential building for their charism, the hospital.[30] There were three hospitals in the city of Rhodes, and the third completed in 1489, is a monumental structure. Now restored, at the time it demonstrated that the Hospitallers had been at the forefront of contemporary medical and hospital practices.[31] Wards were light and airy, surgeons and physicians were resident in the hospital itself, and meals and patient care were considered first rate by many visiting commentators.[32] The *Collachio*, or the main Convent, was built, including the *Auberges* of each *Langue* (or language) of the Order.[33]

The fortifications of Rhodes were continuously improved and strengthened, essential in an era of development in siege artillery, and the harbour fortified with walls and two great towers on the harbour, St Nicholas on the left and on the right, the tower of Master Philibert de Naillac.[34] These strengthened fortifications were needed, for in 1444 Mameluke forces from Alexandria put the city under siege. Again in 1480, the Ottoman Sultan and conqueror of Constantinople, Mehmed II invaded the island with a force that was estimated to be around 70,000.[35] The Grand Master Pierre d'Aubusson successfully defended the city

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silver, followed by unsigned *derniers*. The Maltese period coinage is thoroughly catalogued in Felice Restelli and Joseph Sammut, *The Coinage of the Knights in Malta,* 2 vols (Valletta: Emmanuel Said Publishers, 1977).

[29] Simon Phillips, *The Prior of the Knights Hospitaller in Late Medieval England* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2009).

[30] Baron Fradin de Belabre, *Rhodes of the Knights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908).

[31] Anna Valkana, *The Knights of Rhodes* (Attiki, Greece: Michael Toubis Editions, 2005), 90.

[32] Kitchens were close to the patients, and food was delivered to the wards on the upper floors by an ingenious system of 'dumb waiters'. There were separate wards for males and females and people of all religions were nursed and healed, and even catered for with prayer areas for their respective spiritual needs.

[33] The various nationalities in the Order, were grouped in *Langues*, and were generally housed in *Auberges* that were distinctive that that nationality. In some cases, such as The *Langue* of Castile, Portuguese members were enrolled. Scottish and Irish Members were considered members of the Priory of England, whilst France was divided into three *Langues*, namely France, Auvergne and Provence.

[34] Formerly called Tour Saint-Michel, the tower of Master de Naillac was destroyed in an earthquake in 1856.

[35] Meḥmed-i-s̲ānī II (1432-1481). Grand Master d'Aubusson writes that the Ottoman forces amounted to 109 ships and 70,000 men. Eric Brockman, *The Two Sieges of Rhodes*, 71. The Latin text is provided in Kenneth Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant 1204-1571*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1976), vol. 1, 351, n. 18. The full text of the letter, dated 13 September 1480, to the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick

and the Ottomans retired defeated.[36] They would return under Suleiman II, the Magnificent (Sūleyman-i-s̲ānī), in 1522, and after a long siege the Order capitulated, but with honour.[37] From Rhodes they were led into exile by their Grand Master, Frà Philippe Villiers de L'Isle Adam.[38] Initially the Order sailed first to Crete in 1523, and then spent the next seven years in exile in Viterbo and Nice (Nizza), then under the rule of the Counts of Savoy.[39]

It was not an auspicious time for the homeless knights of Rhodes. The effects of the German and the English Reformation would soon be felt in the loss of the properties of the Order in protestant Germany, and the abolition of the *Langue* of England. These years of exile also took place at a time of severe violence in Catholic Italy, including the 'four years' war' that started in 1521, which culminated in the sack of Rome in May 1527 by mutinous elements of the army of the Emperor Charles V, followed by that of Florence in 1530. As early as 1523 the Emperor Charles V had offered Malta and the North African port of Tripoli to the

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III is to be found in Dafoe p. 91-95. Stephen Dafoe, *Knights Hospitaller* (Hersham, Surrey: Ian Allen Publishing, 2010).

[36] The siege of Rhodes of 1480 and three other episodes are recounted in the history by the Vice-Chancellor of the Order, Guillaume Caoursin (c.1430-1501). An illuminated copy with some outstanding painted scenes is held in the Bibliothèque Nationale F-Pn (BnF ms latin 6067). Musicians are present on two pages. One illumination depicting the arrival on Rhodes of Prince Djem, the brother of the Sultan Bajazet, shows the prince being welcomed in the harbour by no less than fourteen trumpeters (175r). On page 186 *verso*, the prince is dining with Grand Master d'Aubusson, and serenaded by six trumpeters and two shawms, including three musicians in a raised gallery above the diners. In 2011 a further annotated rough draft of the text was found in the Vatican Library (Vatican, Reg. lat.1847).

[37] Grand Master Frà Pierre (later Cardinal) d'Aubusson (1423-1503). Established on Rhodes, the Order had elevated the importance of the title of the elected head or Master, to that of Grand Master. Pierre d'Aubusson had been Prior of Auvergne, and had been summoned to Rhodes in 1468, to take charge of the construction of extra fortifications of the city by Grand Master Giovanni Battista Orsini (d. 1476). D'Aubusson had previously served on Rhodes from 1460 as *Castellan*. By 1474 he had been appointed Captain General of the ground forces on Rhodes and was elected Grand Master on 17 June 1476, serving in that position for twenty-seven years. Because of his successful leadership during the 1480 siege against the Ottomans, he was to be considered one of the great military figures of the century.

[38] Sire, 283. Frà Philippe Villers de L'Isle Adam, (1464-1534), was elected as the 44th Grand Master of the Order on 22 January 1522. He died on 21 August 1534 and was buried in St Anne's Church on Fort St Angelo. His remains are now in the crypt in St John's Cathedral in Valletta. Charles Mula, in *The Princes of Malta,* gives the day of his death as both 21 and 22 August. The latter date is also inscribed on his memorial stone which is still in St Angelo. His surname is spelled variously as L'Isle Adam or l'Isle Adam. He may not be the 44th Grand Master, as Burgtorf has discovered one other name of an early master from the period around the Third Crusade - Frà Girbert Eral (1193-4), Burgtorf, 79. Prior to the third crusade Frà Girbert had served as the provincial Master of Spain and Provence.

[39] Much of the *Collachio* and the principal buildings and fortification of the Knights have been successfully restored by the Greek Archaeological Survey, based in the Old City of Rhodes.

Order.[40] This opportunity was frustrated by knights of the French *Langue* who resisted the Order being in placed in the Spanish sphere of influence.[41] But in 1527, the Grand Council voted to accept the Emperor's offer, and following the *Paix des Dames* the Convent began to move towards Sicily and then on to Malta.[42] On 26 October 1530, Grand Master de L'Isle Adam arrived on Malta and was received in Mdina by the *Università*.[43] It was an event that would shake Malta out of her mediaeval semi-isolation. The Order began its rule, which would last on the islands until 1798.

Malta. 1530-1798.

The presence of the Order on Malta brought great prosperity to the islands, but it also had one unintended consequence for the Maltese. The knights' naval activities and raids upon Islamic shipping drew constant retaliation from the Barbary pirates, and from the Ottoman Sultanate itself.[44] In July 1551 the northern island of Gozo had been raided and virtually the entire population taken into slavery in North Africa. Apart from the old city of Mdina (Città Notabile), and Fort St Angelo in the Birgu, there were virtually no fortified places on Malta itself, which could ensure the safety of the Maltese and the knights.[45] The Order was faced with huge financial costs in strengthening these places, and the neighbouring Senglea peninsula. In addition, the *Auberges* or residences of the Knights had to be constructed as

[40] Sire, 60. Tripoli had been captured by Spanish Hapsburg forces in 1510, and remained in Christian hands until 1551. Unlike the fertile island of Rhodes, the islands of Malta and Gozo, with their 243 square kilometres of rocky landscape, were a startling and barren contrast.

[41] Whilst on Malta, the three French-speaking *Langues* of France, Auvergne and Provence provided about 44 per cent of Knights to the Order. As a sign of their *Gallic* independence, and at a time of the great rivalry between Spain and France, the French knights kept their clocks on Malta running on French time, rather than the Maltese time of one hour earlier.

[42] The Treaty of the *Paix des Dames* was signed on 3 August 1529.

[43] This important moment, which was to have far-reaching consequences for the Maltese people, was depicted in the painting of the event by Antoine Favray (1706-c.1791). The painting is in the holdings of the National Museum of Fine Arts in Valletta.

[44] The proximity of Maltese language to its Arabic heritage is shown in the Maltese words for the Grand Master being *I Sultan*.

[45] The Birgu, the first peninsula on the left hand side of the Grand Harbour, was defended by the existing Fort St Angelo, and became the headquarters and residence of the Grand Masters. Prior to the construction of the Conventual Church of St John in the new city of Valletta, the fort's small chapel dedicated to St Anne was the first burial place of the Grand Masters.

well as various buildings for their administration. And of course a hospital was built in the Birgu, a facility that even before 1565 had been enlarged twofold.[46]

The Knights had one great final trial to undergo against the Ottoman Turks. This occurred in 1565 when a combined Ottoman, Egyptian and Tripolitanian fleet converged on Malta, transporting in addition to the sailors on the galleys, an elite Ottoman army – the total number of combatants may have exceeded 60,000. The successful defence of the two cities of Birgu and Senglea by the Grand Master, Frà Jean de la Valette, was attributed by the Order's historians and propagandists to him alone.[47] But it can be argued that a strategy had been agreed between that Grand Master, and the Viceroy of Naples and Sicily, the experienced soldier, sailor and tactician, Don Garcia de Toledo.[48]

After the lifting of the siege, it was resolved to build a new city above Fort St Elmo on the heights of Mount Scibberas, which was named Valletta in honour of the victorious Grand Master. Donations were received from many European rulers - the largest toward the construction being provided by Pope Pius V.[49] In designing Valletta the entire experience of the Order as a hospitaller and military organisation was brought into play. The city was laid out on an extraordinary grid pattern of streets - to allow for easy ventilation, as well as to provide clear lines for artillery fire and transport should the Ottomans ever break into the city. The Grand Master's Palace, the *Auberges* for the various *Langues* were erected, as well as numerous churches, all designed in style from the early to the late baroque.[50] A great hospital, the *Sacra Infirmeria,* was constructed from 1574 by Grand Master La Cassiere, who

[46] Michael Ellul, 'The Holy Infirmary of the Order', *Journal of the Monastic Military Orders,* 2 (2009): 39-50. Later the Birgu was to be called Vittoriosa, in commemoration of the great siege of 1565.

[47] Frà Jean Parisot de la Valette (1494-1568) is regarded as the greatest of the Grand Masters. Elected 49th Grand Master on 21 August 1557, la Valette had been a participant in the final siege of Rhodes in 1522, and at one period had been a slave aboard an Islamic galley.

[48] La Valette and Don Garcia personally discussed the forthcoming strategy on Malta before the siege, and when the de Toledo papers are finally investigated, more light might be thrown upon this matter. Don Garcia's own son Frederic was killed in the siege on Malta in 1565. In 1570 the Viceroy was thoroughly consulted before the Battle of Lepanto by the allied commander Don John of Austria – a sign of the respect in which this experienced soldier was held. Numerous letters are cited in Sir William Stirling-Maxwell, *Don John of Austria,* 2 vols (London: Longmans, Green, 1883), 41-446.

[49] Emanuel Buttigieg, *Nobility, Faith and Masculinity The Hospitaller Knights of Malta, c.1580-c.1700* (London: Continuum, 2011), 9. This Pope's bust can be seen in a prominent place in the square beside the Conventual Church.

[50] Each *Langue* had its own church in Valletta, such as St Catharine's for the *Langue* of Italy and Our Lady of Liesse for the *Langue* of France. Numerous Greek inhabitants came from Rhodes to Malta with the Order, and also had their own Orthodox church, which still exists.

was also responsible for the construction of the Conventual Church of St John.[51] The entire city of Valletta and the two adjoining cities of Vittoriosa and Senglea were surrounded by massive fortifications. The Order maintained a small but efficient defensive land army, as well as naval personnel who served on the Order's military galleys and transport ships. In the future, the Order took part in the Battle of Lepanto, the long Cretan campaign and the siege of Candia, and the Danube Expedition of 1736-1739.[52] The war at sea with the Ottoman Empire and especially the North African Regencies continued as late as 1797.

The administration of the state on Malta was highly efficient, and the Order employed many Maltese and other nationalities. It maintained official Embassies of the Order to many European states including Russia, and the protocol and etiquette of the Grand Master's court was laid out and officially observed, as it would be by any sovereign entity.[53] The port of Valletta served as a vital transit point for Mediterranean trade, and Maltese seamen and the knights themselves served in land and sea forces, as well as in the diplomatic service of many European countries, again including Russia. Coming from many European states, the knights residing on Malta brought an international sophistication and elegance to Valletta. This is seen in their joint but often individual patronage through the Order of the arts, architecture, the church and service to the community through the great hospital. Patronage by members of the Order was seen both as a public obligation, but also as a tool to ensure rapid promotion to a revenue-yielding Commandery. Grand Master Perellós y Rocafull was a liberal Maecenas to the 'Religion' and to the 'Convent', witnessed by his donation of the magnificent Gobelin tapestries to the Conventual Church, and many other significant contributions. He was munificent, but also forward about broadcasting his piety and his chastity, a feature that did not prevent him from dying of the effects of the mercury cure for syphilis.[54] Amongst the knights were scientists and savants, writers and painters, as

[51] Frà Jean l'Evesque de la Cassiere (1503-1581). A Knight from the *Langue* of Auvergne, he was the 51st Grand Master of the Order.

[52] Robert Dauber, *The Navy of the Order of Malta at the Danube in the War against the Turks 1736-1739* (Vienna: privately published by the author, 2011).

[53] Alain Blondy, *Usages et étiquettes observées à Malte à la Cour du Grand Maître, au Conseil, à l'Église (1762),* translated and annotated by Alain Blondy (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2011).

[54] Grand Master Frà Ramón Perellós y Rocafull (1637-1720). Giacomo Capello, the resident Venetian Ambassador to the Court at Naples, was scathing in his regular reports to the *Serenissima*, through his pungent criticism of Perellós. Victor Malia-Milanes. 'Images of the Other: Venice's Perception of the Knights of Malta', in *The Culture and Politics of Discrimination* (Pisa: University of Pisa, 2003), 63-79.

well as distinguished churchmen and military leaders.[55] The University of Malta was established in 1592 as the *Collegium Melitense*, and a separate medical school and school of anatomy, the *Collegio Medico,* was established in 1771.[56] Under the security and prosperity afforded by the Order's rule, the Maltese population expanded at a considerable rate, although occasional outbreaks of the plague and influenza epidemics inhibited growth.[57] Above all, the Order kept the North African pirates at bay for almost 270 years.[58]

As a ruling prince but also an elected head of an exempt religious order, the Grand Master was in an unusual situation. The dependence of the Order on the Pope in Rome was spiritually essential, but irksome on a secular level, and the Grand Magistry often tried to distance itself from attempts by the Papacy to assert control over temporal matters on Malta.[59] 'Though he was proud to be subject directly to the Holy See and to the supreme authority of His Holiness, in no way would Pinto, as supreme prince within his dominion by right of sovereignty, recognise the pontiff as the chief ruler of his subjects'.[60] Pinto, of all Grand Masters, safeguarded his sovereignty and proclaimed his ruling status, by the introduction of a closed crown, prominently displayed from 1741 in his portraits and on the coinage.[61]

[55] Amongst visual artists, professed members of the Order included the painters Caravaggio, Matteo Preti and Antoine Favray.

[56] Paul Cassar, *Medical History of Malta* (London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1964).

[57] Outbreaks of the plague took place in 1592, 1623, 1655 and 1675. The quarantine hospital or Lazaretto was built on Manoel Island in 1592, and over many years it 'entertained' many notable visitors, including John Henry Newman. Notwithstanding these health emergencies, the population of Malta had increased from 60,000 in 1700 to around 100,000 in 1797.

[58] One of the ramifications of the fall of the Order on Malta in 1798 was the declaration of war by the United States on the Regencies in 1801 to 1805, a conflict that soaked up twenty per cent of the young Republic's revenues.

[59] Grand Master (and Cardinal de Verdalle) had initiated the cardinal's hat and the ducal crown on the grand magistral coat of arms, as well as on the obverse of the coinage of the Order.

[60] AIM, Corr. 3, f. 240r. Frank Ciappara, *The Roman Inquisition in Enlightened Malta* (Pietà, Malta: Pin Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2000), 133. Grand Master Frà Manuel Pinto da Fonesca (1681-1773), a Portuguese Knight of the *Langue* of Castile, was elected 68th Grand Master of The Order of Malta on 18 January 1741, ruling for thirty-two years.

[61] Carmel Testa, *The Life and Times of Grand Master Pinto 1741-1773* (Valletta, Malta: Midsea Books, 1989). In one of his official portraits, by Frà Antoine Favray (1706-1798) Pinto's right arm is extended, pointing to the closed crown on a table. This statement of sovereignty would not be lost on his contemporaries, who well understood the formalised gesture of the Baroque period. See Dene Barnett, *The Art of Gesture: The practices and principles of 18th century acting* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1987).

Despite a positive rule, the late eighteenth century and the Enlightenment were difficult times for the Church and the Order. Religious life on Malta was guided for the general Maltese population by the Bishop in Mdina, and for the members of the Order by the Grand Prior in the Conventual Church and the colleges for the Conventual Chaplains. The Church on Malta was conservative, and the thoughtful reforms inspired by the Synod of Pistoia of 1786, had no time to permeate the Maltese religious landscape.[62] The devotions and the cults of the Knights were well established and on Malta centred on devotion to Mary, to the patron of the Order, St John the Baptist, St Lawrence and the national saint of Malta, St Paul.[63] Whilst the majority of knights carried out their spiritual obligations of the Office, such as Lauds, Vespers, and the Mass, some exceptional persons stood out as diluting the long established religious tenets of the Order. Certainly at the Convent, religious life was concentrated and regulated, though at times interrupted by the knight's caravans on the Order's galleys in the Mediterranean.[64] On the islands, and in accordance with the Code and Constitution of the Order, the knights continued their regular schedule of personally attending to the physical comfort of the patients in the *Sacra Infirmeria.*[65] Medical and pharmaceutical treatment was entirely free, partly provided for by the imposition of a tax on tobacco, the proceeds of which were dedicated to the various hospitals, for the care of the sick and the aged, and also the maintenance of the local pharmacies.[66]

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[62] Charles A. Bolton, *Church Reform in 18th Century Italy -The Synod of Pistoia, 1786* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969).

[63] Frà Giovanni Scarabelli, *Culto e Devozione dei Cavalieri a Malta* (Malta: University Press of Malta, 2004). As told in The Acts of the Apostles, St Paul was shipwrecked on Malta, and held in loose confinement at Rabat. The grotto where the saint was imprisoned is the site of a great double church, and an attached convent for the Conventual Chaplains, the Wignacourt College, which is now the Wignacourt Museum. It was founded by Grand Master Frà Alof de Wignacourt (1547-1621).

[64] *Caravan* was the term used to describe the voyages of the galleys of the Order's Naval Squadron, undertaken by individual knights. One could not gain preferment or promotion without undertaking a number of these extended sea campaigns. Naval activities from Malta were mainly dedicated to safeguarding Christian shipping, and preventing Muslim pirate incursions against coastal regions. Whilst on the galleys, spiritual comfort was sustained by the presence of a priest of the Order. It was uncomfortable that, when the fleet sailed on one of these caravans, the mistresses of some of the Knights lined the parapets of Valletta harbour to mournfully wave off their admirers.

[65] The *Sacra Infirmeria* or the Great Hospital of the Order was, and is one of the great buildings on Malta. It was constructed under Grand Master Jean l'Evesque de La Cassiere in 1575. It was a hospital that was amongst the most modern and healthy in Europe, with superior ventilation, specialist wards and resident medical and nursing staff. At one stage the main hall ward was the longest single room in Europe. La Cassiere was born in France in 1503 and was a knight in the *Langue* of Auvergne. He was elected 51st Grand Master on 27 January 1572 and died in Rome in the midst of a papal enquiry into the Order. It had been provoked by a revolt of some disaffected knights on Malta, over a Magistral Decree concerning their mistresses.

[66] Cassar, 157. The tax had been introduced by Grand Master Jean-Paul Lascaris (1560-1657). Tobacco cultivation on the Islands was thought to promote malaria, and in 1707 was prohibited on Malta.

Despite these humanitarian advances, during the Enlightenment distortions began to appear in some of the basic religious obligations of the professed members of the Order. One of the most notable luminaries of the period was possibly the lay Grand Prior of France, Louis-François de Bourbon, Prince de Conti (1717-1771). Cousin of King Louis XV, he had succeeded the Chevalier d'Orleans as Grand Prior in 1742.[67] Known as the host to the young Mozart in Paris, Conti with his own orchestra, and a great Parisian salon, had assembled a huge collection of paintings and sculptures, described as one of the great collections of France.[68] It included works by Caravaggio, Raphael, Boucher, Rembrandt, and Lorrain. His annual salary of 100,000 *livres* allowed him to generously provide for his mistress, the beautiful *Comtesse* de Boufflers. Feeling the approach of death, Conti outraged traditional French society by barring his door to the Archbishop of Paris, Christophe de Beaumont, who had come to give him the last sacraments.[69] The anti-Jansenist elements of the Church in France were appalled, but it was a sign that the Order was to be beset by troubles, diplomatic, as well as in matters of faith.

Where a few faltered, many others succeeded, and nowhere more surprising, than in areas beyond where one might normally expect the Knights to be. As religious but lay members of a Church Order, and as men who lived in the world, knights in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were often seconded to monarchs or states, assisting in the governance of overseas provinces. In the field of exploration, Frà Antonio da Pigafetta from Vicenza had accompanied Magellan's historic first voyage (1519-1522), around the world, and as one of the eighteen explorers who survived the expedition, wrote the definitive book

[67] Frederick Ryan, *The House of the Temple – A Study of Malta and its Knights and the French Revolution* (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1930), 59.

[68] There is a fine painting of Mozart's visit to the Priory Palace in 1766, by the French painter Michel Barthélemey Ollivier. In the holdings of the Musée du Louvre, it shows the nine-year-old Mozart at the harpsichord, described in *The New Grove*, as being accompanied on the guitar by Jélyotte – an entry which might refer to the great *haut-contre* of French Opera of the period.

[69] Christophe de Beaumont Du Repaire (1703-1781), Archbishop of Paris from 1746, and until his death, a rigorous opponent of the Jansenists. Henri Daniel-Rops, *The Church in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Dent, 1964), 255. It is possible that Conti, who had the notorious Parisian barrister and canon law authority, Louis-Adrien Le Paige as his judicial *Bailli* to the Order, harboured strong Jansenist sympathies. At the time, the aggressive Beaumont had precipitated the 'refusal-of-sacraments' controversy. He carried this out, by denying the last sacraments to opponents of the Papal Bull *Unigenitus,* to those who could not produce a *billet de confession* from a priest who had officially accepted the controversial decree. Van Kley, Dale, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution* (New haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 142-3.

on the voyage.[70] He was followed in the Pacific by Frà Garcia Joffre de Loaysa, who led the first expedition to the Philippines in 1525.[71] Several Viceroys of the Philippines were Knights of Malta, and in the 16th and 17th centuries, the Order of Malta owned properties there. It was common in the Spanish Court to request knights to act as Viceroys or Military Governors in Spanish Provinces, and as such they served in Guatemala, Colombia, Peru and Chile in those positions. The greatest of the Spanish Viceroys of Mexico, who sponsored the Franciscan pioneer, Fray Junípero Serra, in settlling California was a Bailliff of the Order - Frà Antonio María Bucareli y Ursúa (1717-1779).[72] Others were major explorers, including Alessandro Malaspina (1754-1810).[73] In three voyages of exploration he charted vast areas of the Pacific, including in his itinerary a visit to the embryonic settlement at Sydney Cove in March 1793.[74] He was not the first Knight of Malta to visit Australia. In 1788 Frà Jean Gabriel du Pac de Bellegarde (1765-1788) a navigator on the La Perouse expedition visited Botany Bay, raising the curiosity of the English, but also the fear of a French invasion of New South Wales. Joining La Perouse in Macau, de Bellegarde was killed on Vanikoko in the Solomon Islands, when the fleet foundered in a storm.[75]

In North America and the West Indies small territories were purchased by the Order, and in 1639 these included the islands of Saint Croix, St Christopher (now St Kitts), and St Martin. One knight, Frà de Lonvilliers de Poincy, administered these properties for 22 years until his death in 1660.[76] Many knights were involved in the early settlement and administration of French Canada. It was in the service of the French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Papal and Russian navies that the knights made a significant impact. The greatest French Admiral in the 18th century was the *Bailli* Frà Pierre-André de Suffren (1729-1788), whose use of the revolutionary tactic of 'cutting the line' in a naval battle, was so successfully exploited by

[70] Frà Antonio Pigafetta, *The Voyage of Magellan – The Journal of Antonio Pigafetta* (Eaglewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1969). Pigafetta was received into the Order by Grand Master L'Isle Adam in April 1524.
[71] Pedro M Picornell, *The Knights of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in the Philippines in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Manila: Sovereign Military Order of Malta Philippine Association, n.d.).
[72] Bernard Bobb, *The Viceregency of Antonio Maria Bucareli in New Spain, 1771-1779* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1962).
[73] John Kendrick, *Alejandro Malaspina – Portrait of a Visionary* (Montreal and London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999).
[74] *Ibid* 69-75.
[75] Recent archaeological surveys suggest that survivors of the expedition stayed on the island for some time, and the remains of a French camp have been found.
[76] Duncan Macpherson, *De Poincy and the Order of St John in the New World* (London: Venerable Order of St John, Historical Pamphlet No. 9, 1949).

Horatio Nelson at the Battle of the Nile.[77] The American Patriot forces in the War of Independence were joined on land and at sea by members of the Order, and also by numerous Maltese sailors. The Order maintained ambassadors in many European states, and immediately prior to the French invasion in 1798, negotiations were already in train to establish diplomatic relations between the United States of America and the Order.[78] From its base on tiny Malta, the Order had literally become a worldwide entity.

But it had enemies over the horizon, and none more so that the new Republic of France. Despite the fact that the Order vitally protected French shipping from the Barbary pirates in the Mediterranean, on 7 June 1793 the French Government wrote a directive to Genoa, to Count but now Citizen Ange-Marie Eymar in the following words: 'The Order of Malta as such does not deserve anything but indifference and scorn at the hands of the Republic; it is a shameful monument, erected by religion and by the pride of the nobles'.[79] In a ruling passed by the French Assembly on 19 September 1792, the Order's properties in France and French territories were confiscated.[80] This was in a detailed decree (*projet de décret*), of fourteen articles that had been introduced by Vincent, the Deputy for the Marne. This was followed by a further decree on 22 October, where the Ministry of the Interior was authorised to sell all movable property in the commanderies of the Order.[81] The dissolution occurred just as Malta was experiencing a severe shortage of corn for bread and feed.[82] The tumult and trauma of the revolution and its conquests had the effect of reducing the annual income of the Order from 1,538,000 *scudi* in 1788 to just 415,000 *scudi* in 1798.[83] In 1797 the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand, previously the Bishop of Autun, agreed with the revolutionary sentiments, and in 1797 opened the way for

[77] Roderick Cavaliero, *Admiral Satan – The Life and Times of Suffren* (London: I.B.Tauris Publishers, 1994).
[78] Paul Cassar, *Early Relations between Malta and the United States of America* (Valletta: Midsea Books, 1976).
[79] Mémoire addressed to Eymar, MAEP *Correspondance diplomatique, Malte* 22, no. 32.
[80] This decree was promulgated two days before the abolition of the French Monarchy on 21 September 1792.
[81] Ryan, 208.
[82] Venice, Senate files, *Dispacci dei Consoli,* Malta 1793-1797, Consul Miari to the Senate, 17 April 1793.
[83] Carmel Testa, *The French in Malta 1798-1800* (Valletta: Midsea Books, 1997), 4. In fact the Maltese *corso*, or unofficial corsairs sailing under the flag of the Order, yielded an income of 117,000 scudi in the year 1796 alone, against an average income over the previous decade of only 65,500 scudi per year. Anthony Luttrell, 'Eighteenth-Century Malta: Prosperity and Problems', *Hyphen* (Malta) 3/2 (1982): 45.

Napoleon's grand plan – namely, the dispossession of the Order from Malta, to be followed by the invasion of Ottoman Egypt.[84]

France was becoming increasingly preoccupied with the strategic position of Malta, with its fortifications and 'Grand Harbour', a focus accelerated by the increasing interest shown by the Austrians and the Russians in the islands. The situation between the Republic and the Order was exacerbated in November 1793 when Admiral Lord Samuel Hood, the British Naval Commander in the Mediterranean successfully petitioned Grand Master de Rohan for the loan of one thousand trained seamen, in order to support the royalist insurrection and the siege of Toulon.[85] One report about the situation on Malta, sent on 19 September 1797 to the Directory in Paris reads: 'It is suggested that the Pope be asked to dissolve the Order, with the island devolving to either Spain or Naples'.[86] There was some reason for concern, for as the Venetian Consul Antonio Miari wrote, 'The Pope has been [so] furious with us, or rather with our head [the Grand Master], that he has seriously threatened to extend to us the same treatment his immediate predecessor had dealt the Jesuits'.[87] Miari's views were prescient, as Pope Pius VI (1775-1799) had indeed been contemplating the dissolution of the Order.[88] Such a threat to the Order was all too real, and the precedents of the abolition of the Temple by Pope Clement V (1305-1314), and the suppression of the Society of Jesus by Pope Clement XIV (1769-1774) were all too vivid to the Knights. The Order of Malta was about to undergo the most confronting challenge in its long history.

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[84] Talleyrand to Napoleon. 23 September 1797. MAEP *Archives privées*, Desages's papers, 47, pp. 15-16. The idea was not original, for in 1777 the French Foreign Office had despatched Baron François de Tott to Egypt, to investigate whether that province, nominally ruled by the Ottoman Empire, could be occupied and turned into a French colony. Testa, 15, n. 4.

[85] Gregory, 287. Bernard Ireland, *The Fall of Toulon* (London: Cassel, 2005), 242. De Rohan eventually only allowed 400 seamen to depart and work for the British fleet. They departed on HMS Captain on 10 November. This recruitment of Maltese manpower was unsuccessfully tried again in the years 1794 and 1795, in an attempt to hire Maltese soldiers to support the British land forces.

[86] *Correspondance diplomatique, Malte* 23, 187-189.

[87] ASVen, CSM, p.p., Diversorum, busta 403, filza 76, 25 February 1796. In Victor Mallia-Milanes, 'Toward the End of the Order of Hospital: Reflections on the Views of Two Venetian Brethren, Antonio Miari and Ottavio Benvenuti', *The Military Orders* 5 (2012): 170.

[88] *Ibid*. *'si trattava realmente della nostra non-esistenza'*. Frà Antonio Miari di Belluno (1754-1823), of the Grand Priory of Lombardy-Venetia, was the Resident Minister for the Venetian Republic to the Grand Magistry in Valletta. He had been Grand Master de Rohan's secretary for Italian Affairs from February 1793, and later was the Order's Envoy at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818.He had accompanied von Hompesch into exile to Trieste. His *palazzo* in Valletta is now the Museum of Fine Arts.

Part Two – Sacred Music of the Order and Music on Malta.

Sacred Music on Malta.

The 'Baptism of Malta' occurred with the shipwreck and detention of St Paul on Malta, as recounted in the Acts of the Apostles.[89] After the conversion of the islands by St Paul, Christianity flourished under the Roman and Byzantine Empires, and we know that the table or *mensa* with carved edges located in the Rabat catacombs served as an altar in the Paleochristian period.[90] The church on Malta seems to have been transferred from the Ecclesiastical Province of Sicily, with its allegiance to Rome, to the Patriarchate of the East in Constantinople, around 731/2 by the Byzantine Emperor Leo III Isaurikus, and later on by further instructions from Emperor Leo VI in 854.[91] Some authorities date the Muslim occupation of Malta as having taken place by 870, and records detail the efforts made by Pope Marinus I to secure the release from prison of both the Archbishop of Syracuse and the Bishop of Malta.[92] Two hundred years of Muslim domination diminished Byzantine influence, and although the Greek rite was maintained in Sicily and south eastern Italy until the 1400's, its influence on Malta was small. In 1090, the islands were reconquered over a period of two or three days by Count Roger the Norman. The re-establishment of the Diocese on Malta was effected and it was included in the nine dioceses established by the Norman administration of Sicily. A Bishop of Malta, Rainaldus, is mentioned in a document of 28 December 1121, signed by Pope Calixtus II, where the witness *Rainaldus* is described as *Episcopus Militensis.*[93]

Many of the crucial early documents in the Archives of the Cathedral Museum of Mdina have been published and their information analysed in the three volume series, *Melita Sacra*.[94] A clear picture emerges of the development of the church on Malta and Gozo, and

[89] Acts, 27: 41-44, and 28: 1-11.
[90] Arthur Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta 60-1530* (Floriana, Malta: Empire Press, Catholic Institute, 1967), 16.
[91] *Ibid,* 25-26.
[92] (Dun) Vincent Borg, *Melita Sacra I – The Maltese Diocese and the Sicilian Environment from the Norman Period till 1500 A.D.* 2 Vols (Malta: APS Bank, and the author, 2008), 11. *Melita Sacra II* covers the period from 1500 to 1600.
[93] *Militensis* or *Melitensis*?
[94] Borg, *Melita Sacra I.*

the establishment of parishes on the islands. The centre of the church was based around the Cathedral of St Paul at Mdina (Città Notabile), and even during the rule of the Order of Malta, this remained the seat of the Bishops of Malta. Through the following Hohenstaufen, Angevin and Aragonese periods on Malta, the right of the ruling power in Sicily, to nominate and present the name of each new bishop to The Holy See was carefully guarded. Many of the bishops were Sicilian and distant landlords, and as Vincent Borg notes 'remained renowned for their absence.'

The sung Office would have been celebrated from early times and some mediaeval documents have been transcribed and interpreted by the Maltese scholar Stanley Fiorini.[95] His studies show that there are consistent reports of the Divine Office being sung as early as 1274. In 1496 Laurentius Vagnolo was appointed organist at the cathedral, and was to be taught by another ecclesiastic.[96] This arrangement was obviously unsuccessful, for in April of the same year another organist was appointed, Nicolaus de Vermiglia.[97] The first detailed mention of an organist and his duties occurs when Don Laurentius (Laurenzio) Caxaro and Don Simeon Ferriolo are mentioned as being the organists at the Cathedral in 1528 - that is two years before the arrival of the Order.[98] In 1456 the old cathedral organ is mentioned as being placed between the altars of the chapels of St Lucy and St James. It was in that year that the cathedral acquired a new organ from Sicily. Caxaro was a canon lawyer priest and in 1520 is cited as the agent of Vicar General Don Consalvus Canchur. Don Laurentius, who was active in the diocese and served as an assessor of two succeeding Vicars General up to 1546, humbly described himself as an *Advocatus minimus*.[99] He continued in his capacity of organist to 1533. In 1515 Don Andreotta Scavuni is listed as the teacher of *canto fermo* at the cathedral, and payments of one *uncia* were received by an assistant, presumably to operate the bellows on the organs. Caxaro was paid the annual salary of ten *uncie* for playing and maintaining the instrument.[100] From 1539 to October 1544, neither Caxaro nor Ferriolo are mentioned, but from the latter date reappear in their old positions.[101] We know

[95] Stanley Fiorini, 'Church Music and Musicians in Late Medieval Malta', *Melita Historica* MH, x, 1 (1988): 1-11.
[96] ACM, 14V.01.
[97] ACM, 14V.08.
[98] ACM, Misc, 2, 407.
[99] CEM AO 22, 177.
[100] Borg, *Melita Sacra 2*; 265.
[101] ACM Mandati 4, 266r-v, 284r, 354r; Mandati 6, 53r-v.

that Salvo, the son of Caxaro, died in September 1565, possibly as a result of the great siege of that year.[102]

The heroic Bishop of Malta, Frà Dominicus Cubelles, died on 22 November 1566, just after the 'great siege'. He had been Bishop of Malta for twenty-six years, from 10 December 1540. The new bishop, chosen from the *Terna* by the Emperor was another member of the Order of St John, their Vice-Chancellor, Frà Martinus Royas de Portalrubio.[103] Although chosen in 1567 he was prevented for various reasons from being installed as bishop for six years, until Pope Gregory XII gave his approval to Royas' nomination, on 5 November 1572. One of the new bishop's early decisions was to invite a musician to expand the style of the music in the liturgy. So in October 1573, the Sienna born composer Giulio Scala was brought to Mdina, where he initiated the first *capella musicale* at the cathedral.[104] Prior to this, the liturgy there had been entirely sung as Gregorian chant. His presence inaugurated a new era and important period in sacred music on Malta, as he was the first instructor in polyphony or *canto figurato* at the cathedral at Mdina. Sadly Giulio Scala left Malta soon after, in June 1574, to work in Messina and later Bergamo.[105] Although literally nothing is known of his music, his *Quinto libro di madrigali a quattro voci* had been published in part books by the Roman printer Antonio Barrè in 1562. Dedicated to the D'Ansalone (or Anselone) family, only one alto part survives in the Morrill Music Library of the Villa I Tatti in Florence. His foundation of a *capella musicale* was the beginning of an important new phase in sacred music in the Diocese of Malta.[106]

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[102] ACM. *Giuliana* II, 1065. Don Simeon Ferriolo died in 1564 in Messina, Sicily. Borg, *Melita Sacra* 2, 297-299.

[103] Both Cubelles, Royas, and his successor as bishop, Frà Thomas Gargallo (d. 1614), were members of the Order, and like Royas, the latter also having been Vice-Chancellor of the Order, when in 1577 he chosen by the Emperor from the *Terna.*

[104] Giovanni (Dun Gwann) Azzopardi, 'La Cappella Musicale della Cattedrale di Malta e i suoi rapporti con la Sicilia', in *Musica Sacra in Sicilia tra rinascimento e barocco: Atti de Convegno di Caltagirone*, *10-12 dicembre 1985*, ed. Daniele Ficola, Istituto della storia di musica dell' Università di Palermo, 5 (Palermo: S.F. Flaccovio editore, 1988), 48-49. Borg, *Melita Sacra* II, 435 cites the surname as Scaglia.

[105] Giulio Scala received the large remuneration of forty *scudi* for his services over the year. He is recorded as receiving his last salary on 26 July 1574. He was succeeded in that position by Christophanus Cannella, who was appointed organist at the cathedral on 1 September 1584, and by the following year the teaching of *canto figurato* was reintroduced. The multi-faceted Cannella occupied the position successfully, as well as teaching organ and *canto fermo*. In 1589 Bishop Gargallo decided to institute the tuition of a young Maltese organist in Palermo, and the nineteen-year-old cleric Michael Zahra was chosen. He returned to Malta in August 1592 and succeeded his mentor Cannella as cathedral organist on 1 October 1593. Borg, *Melita Sacra* II, 436.

[106] The repertoire of the Cathedral at Mdina, as printed in their music library catalogue gives a very accurate indication of the range of Italian polyphony sung there during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The Order of Malta and Sacred Music on Malta.

The arrival of Grand Master Villiers de L'Isle Adam in 1530, together with the Convent of the 'Religion', meant that there were two *capelli* or music establishments on Malta – in Mdina with the Bishop, and at St Lawrence Church in the Birgu with the Order.[107] Many of the personalities and details of salaries of this period, concerning the Mdina cathedral are already given in Bruni, and therefore I will only make a brief commentary and some observations.[108] For varying reasons, sources concerning the *capella* of the Order are less voluminous. Concerning music in the Order, the Chapter General held on Rhodes in 1459, had established an authority under a *maestro del canto*, who would instruct in *canto fermo a tutti i diaconi*.[109]

The Conventual Church had been the recipient of some lavish donations of choir books that have survived. Some of the Order's choir books from the Rhodian period may have been destroyed in the fire that consumed the Order's Conventual Church of St Lawrence in the Birgu in 1532.[110] It was Grand Master de L'Isle Adam who donated choir books bearing his coat of arms and the arms of the Order. The contents of this ten volume set consist of chants for the Mass liturgy, and are therefore properly considered to be graduals or *gradus*. These books contain the introits, tracts, alleluias, offertories and communions for particular feast days. Lavishly illuminated, they were originally thought to have been brought to Malta from Rhodes, but this is not the case. Dated 1533 in some of the illustrations, many of the painted initials contain the motto of the Order *Pour la Foy*.[111] On 20 February 1578, these choral books were carried from Vittoriosa to Valletta, for the consecration of the

[107] At the time the population of the Islands was around 20,000, though this was reduced when a quarter of the population, some 5,000 inhabitants of Gozo were carried off into slavery in 1551 by Dragut Reis. See Godfrey Wettinger, *Slavery in the Islands of Malta and Gozo* (Valletta: Publishers Enterprise Group, 2002), 34. The first mention of the Church of St Lawrence is in 1467 when it is described as *santu laurenzu de lu birgu, beneficium*. See Borg, *Melita Sacra I*, 228, and ACM. Ms 2, 57-58.

[108] Franco Bruni, *Musica e Musicisti alla Cattedrale di Malta nei secoli XVI-XVIII* (Malta: Malta University Press, 2001).

[109] Anthony Hart, *Sacred Music at the Time of the Knights o*f the Knights. http://suite101.com/article/maltese--sacred-music-at-the-time-of-the-knights-of-st-john-a358357 (consulted 21 March 2013).

[110] Martina Caruana, *The L'Isle Adam Illuminated manuscripts and other Illuminated Choral Books in Malta* (Valletta: MJ Productions, 1997), 10.

[111] 'For the Faith'.

Conventual Church of St John by the Archbishop of Monreale, Ludovico Torres.[112] In a new study Theresa Zammit Lupi has analysed each page of the books, and her researches have revealed much that is new, concerning their manufacture and their provenance. She determined that the books were painted and manufactured by the French artisan Jean Pichore, or in his workshop.[113] After the Council of Trent, the Breviary was reformed in 1568 and the Missal in 1570. In the discipline of music, Palestrina and Annibale Zoilo (1537-1592) were authorised to make a revision of the music for both liturgical books. In accordance with their recommendations, some revisions were made in 1582 to the L'Isle Adam books. In the same year Grand Master de Verdalle commissioned a set of lavishly illuminated Antiphonals, which conformed to the revisions of the Council, and these are also in the Museum of the Conventual Church.[114]

One aspect of the social stability, caused by the presence of the Order on Malta, was that it fostered a spiritual renewal on the islands. Many new parishes were established in the countryside and new churches constructed. The role of music, both in the Order and on Malta, was consolidated and expanded. Concerning instruments of the period, the organ of the Cathedral in Mdina survived the earthquake of 1693, which had demolished much of the older structure. It is likely that an organ was installed in the Conventual Church in Valletta when it was inaugurated in 1578. Originally situated in the Chapel of Auvergne, this first organ was later moved into the organ gallery in the Oratory, where Caravaggio's two great paintings currently hang - namely the Beheading of St John the Baptist and St Jerome.[115] This organ in the Oratory, the original small *castrato* or *ottavino* organ has recently been fully restored. The double organ in St John's, as has been mentioned elsewhere, was

[112] Theresa Zammit Lupi, *Cantate Domino – Early Choir Books for the Knights in Malta* (Valletta: Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, 2011), 8.

[113] Lupi states that there are similarities with the Pichore style and that of the Master of Claude de France. See Keble College, MS 43. There are also Italianate influences in some of the illuminations. The Parisian based Jean Pichore was an illuminator of great talent and his works and those of his family workshop are found in many museums and libraries. See Caroline Zöhl, *Jean Pichore - Buchmaler, Graphiker und Verleger in Paris zum 1500* (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols Publishers, 2005).

[114] Frà Hughes Loubenx de Verdalle, of the *Langue* of Provence, was elected 52nd Grand Master on 12 January 1582. On 18 October 1587 he was created a cardinal and died visiting Rome on 4 May 1595. His surname is occasionally spelled as Verdale.

[115] The second masterpiece by the Knight Caravaggio, namely his painting of St Jerome, has also been recently moved into the Oratory of St John's.

installed on either side of the choir, and I will discuss this instrument in a following section.[116]

The archives concerning the *maestri di cappelli* of the Conventual Church of St John, have not survived, or have yet to be identified. Detailed records start only toward the end of the eighteenth century, with Melchior Sammartin, Vincenzo Anfossi, Isouard, and the names of some of the later organists. The earliest mention of the music director of the Conventual Church occurs on 22 December 1605 with the name of Frà Michelangelo Cesis. In a document submitted to Ettore Diotallevi, a member of the Maltese Inquisition, Frà Cesis, a chaplain of the Order of St John describes himself as the *maestro di cappella* of the Conventual Church and teacher of music.[117] Frà Michelangelo was ordained a priest at the Church of St Lawrence in Vittoriosa (Birgu) on 17 December 1608.[118] There are a few other documents from the seventeenth century which shed a little light on the employment of organists and castrati or *musici* at St John's. They refer to the singers Giovanni Castiglione, dated 23 January 1606, and of Jacques le Long (Jacomo Longo di Normandia) on 24 April 1610.[119] There are a few other sources that survive from this period, including additional employment records of the organists Don Carlo Tassoni of Bologna, dated 2 September 1619, and of the *castrato* and supplementary organist Giovanni Battista Mauro, dated 5 July 1629.[120]

On Malta, musicians who were either members of the Order, such as Frà Giuseppe Vivier, or who were non-members, played a part in the liturgical music of the Conventual Church.[121] In 1604 in a decree issued by Grand Master Frà Alof de Wignacourt, it was ruled that

[116] The organ in St John's from Isouard's time is discussed in Chapter two. The old pipes from the double organ in St John's were still in place when they were sent to the Italian firm of Mascioni, prior to the new organ being installed in 1960. Ref. Email correspondence from Dun Gwann Azzopardi, 1 May 2012.

[117] AIM, Processi Criminali, vol. 24B, item 79, f. 671-2, *sortiligum contra Isabellam Fontana di Lentino.* In evidence Cesis states*, 'Ed essendo io maestro di cappella di San Giovanni'* etc. Frà Cesis is not listed in Bonazzi. Francesco Bonazzi, *Elenco dei Cavalieri del S. M. Ordine di S. Giovanni di Gerusalemme – Parte Prima dal 1136-1713* (Naples: np, 1897-1907). In 1608 Diotallevi became Bishop of Fano. He died in 1641.

[118] CEM, RO 1 f. 267v. Also cited in John Azzopardi and Matteo Sansone, *Italian and Maltese Music in the Archives of the Cathedral Museum of Malta* (Malta: Hill Monastic Manuscript Library and The Cathedral Museum, Mdina, 2001), 107.

[119] AOM 1385, f. 67v, and AOM 1389, f. 115r.

[120] AOM 109, f. 207v-208r, and ACM *Miscellanea* 296, f. 390.

[121] Vivier was still active in 1714 and some of his manuscripts are held in the Archives of the Collegiate Church in Cospicua. These manuscripts are unfortunately in very poor condition, with the ink notes coming off the paper.

cappella cantus figurati was to be maintained, and that the Grand Master was to have the responsibility to allot salaries to the *magistrum cappellae*, and to the *cantoris et musicos*.

For some time, two members of the Conventual Franciscans resided on Malta, serving as musicians. One of them, Frà Giovann Battista Balzano was honoured with the title of *magister Musicae* on 5 February 1661.[122] One other, a composer of distinction, served in the Conventual Church, and especially deserves mention. Frà Michelangelo Falusi was born in Rome around 1645 and died on Malta in 1733. Like Balzano, Falusi was a friar of the Franciscan Minor Conventuals. He was a fine composer in the Roman baroque tradition and several of his works survive. Originally organist at Foligno, he was invited to Pavia, and then served as *maestro di capella* at the Basilica of the Holy Apostles in Rome. On 13 November 1683 he was appointed to the Accademia di Santa Cecilia. At some time later he was transferred to the Franciscan house in Valletta, and served as the *maestro di cappella* at the Conventual Church, a post that he held until his death, which occurred in 1733. During that period, the organist of the Conventual Church was Matteo Arena, the father of the composer Giuseppe Arena (1707-1784), who died shortly after the birth of his gifted composer son. The younger Arena went on to have a distinguished career in Naples and elsewhere.[123] Falusi was a resident at the Valletta Friary, a site that is very close to the Conventual Church. Dun Gwann Azzopardi cites Falusi: '[he] always performed music on the feast days of this Franciscan Confraternity, the Immaculate Conception, and always signed his name in the records held in the Friary as *Maestro di cappella di San Giovanni'*.[124] It is written that a box of his personal effects, possibly containing music was held in the

[122] Born in Malta in 1618, Balzano was active in Catania as the maestro di cappella, and later was resident at the Franciscan Friary on Malta from 1661 until his death on 4 January 1695. He was possibly a relative of the two Maltese composers, Domenico and Giuseppe Balzano. Some of their activities are catalogued in the Mdina Archives collection.

[123] Joseph Vella Bondin, 'Giuseppe Arena (1707-1784), in *Melitensium Amor Festschrift in honour of Dun Gwann Azzopardi*, ed. Toni Cortis, Thomas Freller and Lino Bugeja (Malta: n.p. 2002), 391-396. After his studies in Naples, Arena decided not to return to Malta, but to pursue a career on the Continent. Apart from excerpts from *opera seria*, we have records of eight operas by Arena, from *Achille in Sciro*, which received its premiere in Rome on 7 November 1738, to *Il vecchio deluso*, composed for the Carnival of 1754 in Naples. His operatic works were performed in Venice, Turin, Naples, Rome and London. He was well regarded as an organist, and as *maestro di capella* at the church of S. Filippo Neri in Naples. He was resident musician to Don Luigi, the 12th Prince of Bisignano (1727-1772). The Princes of Bisignano had been active patrons of music for over three centuries.

[124] Dun Gwann Azzopardi, email, 12 May 2012.

Franciscan house in Valletta, but this has since disappeared.[125] Several of his works survive in Italian archives, including one work printed in parts, the *Responsoria Hebdomadis Sanctae*. This long series of responses were published in Rome in 1684 by V. Mascardi in 4 voice parts with organ continuo. The opening of the Responses is illustrated below.

[125] Discussions in Rabat, Malta with Dun Gwann Azzopardi in 2011. See Azzopardi and Sansone, 109. An inventory of 1733 of the Valletta Friary mentions an *armaria torchino* that had been the property of Padre Falusi. It is possible that this chest contained some of Falusi's compositions.

Responoria
Hebdomadis Sanctae
Roma 1684

Feria Quinta - Primo Nocturno
In Coena Domini

Mag Fr Michaele Angelo Falusi
c1645 Roma-1733 Malta
Edited by Fra` Richard Divall

Responsorio I - In Monte Oliveti:

Cantus: In Mon-te O - li - ve - ti, in Mon-te O-li-ve-ti o - ra - vit ad Pa - trem.
Altus: In Mon-te O - li - ve - ti, O - li - ve - ti o - ra - vit ad Pa - trem.
Tenor: In Mon-te O - li - ve - ti o - ra - vit ad pa - trem.
Bassus: In Mon-te O - li - ve - ti o - ra - vit ad Pa - trem.
Organum

8
C: Pa - ter, si fi - e - ri pot - est, tran se-at à me, à me ca - lix i - ste.
A: Pa - ter, si fi - e - ri pot - est, tran-se-at à me, à me ca-lix i - ste.
T: Pa - ter, si fi - e - ri pot - est, tran se-at à me, à me ca - lix i - ste.
B: Pa - ter, si fi - e - ri pot - es, tran-se-at à me, à me ca-lix i - ste.
Org

14 **Spiritus Quidem:**
C: Spi - ri - tus qui - dem prom - ptus est, ca - ro au - tem in - fir - ma.
A: Spi - ri - tus qui - dem prom - ptus est, ca - ro au - tem in - fir ma.
T: Spi - ri - tus qui - dem prom - ptus est, ca - ro au - tem in - fir - ma.
B: Spi - ri - tus qui - dem prom - ptus est, ca - ro au - tem in - fir - ma.
Org

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Falusi also published a psalm, *In convertendo* in an anthology of sacred music, published in 1683 by Mascardi, as *Salmi Vespertini à quatro Voci.*[126] Of even greater interest are the manuscript parts that survive for three Masses by Falusi, that are held in the Archive of the Oratory of the Filippini in Bologna.[127] The title page of each part generally reads *Misse breve a quattro D.S.M.F.* and are entitled *Primo Tono, Secondo Tono, Terzo Tono* and *Sesto Tono*.[128] They are written for 6 part voices with organ continuo and figured bass. Apart from the opening bars of some movements, where soprano one and alto one are either solo or divisi, the works only have four parts for soprano, alto, tenor and bass. On other parts of the manuscripts are the enigmatic letters F.A.N.F.A.D.R. and D.S.F.A.N.F.A. These abbreviations may refer to his name, such as *Frà Angelo Falusi dottore* for the former, or for the latter, one explanation might be *del Signor Frà Angelo Falusi*.[129] The Masses are in the style of the Roman parody Mass, are extremely well written for the voices and architecturally very craftsmanlike. The designations of Falusi's masses, e.g. *Primo Tono* etc., derive not so much from the related eight *Tuoni eccleiastici,* or psalm antiphons and *evovae* which were common in Neapolitan liturgical practices.[130]

[126] Published as *Salmi Vespertini à quatro Voci concertati, e brevi con l'Organo. Per Tutte le Feste dell'Anno di diversi autori. Raccolti da Gio' Battista Caifabri Opera IV. In Roma, per il Mascardi, MDCLXXXIII. Con licenza de' Superiori.* Edition by Richard Divall.

[127] I-Bof (49): 6 parti voc. E Org. Mss. Del sec. XVII, cm. 25x18. Although four Masses are catalogued as having been composed by the Franciscan musician, only the first three are by Falusi. These three Masses have been edited by Richard Divall.

[128] The D.S.M.F. may be an abbreviation for *del Signor Michelangelo Falusi*.

[129] I am grateful to Dun Gwann Azzopardi who suggested these possibilities to me.

[130] I am grateful to Dr Nicholas Baragwanath, Associate Professor, Department of Music, University of Nottingham for bringing this to my attention. The matter is addressed in Gregory Barnett 'Tonal Organization in Seventeenth-Century Music Theory' in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), 407-55.

Messe Brevi à quatro

Messa Primo Tono

Michel Angelo Falusi [c1645 Roma - 1733 Malta]
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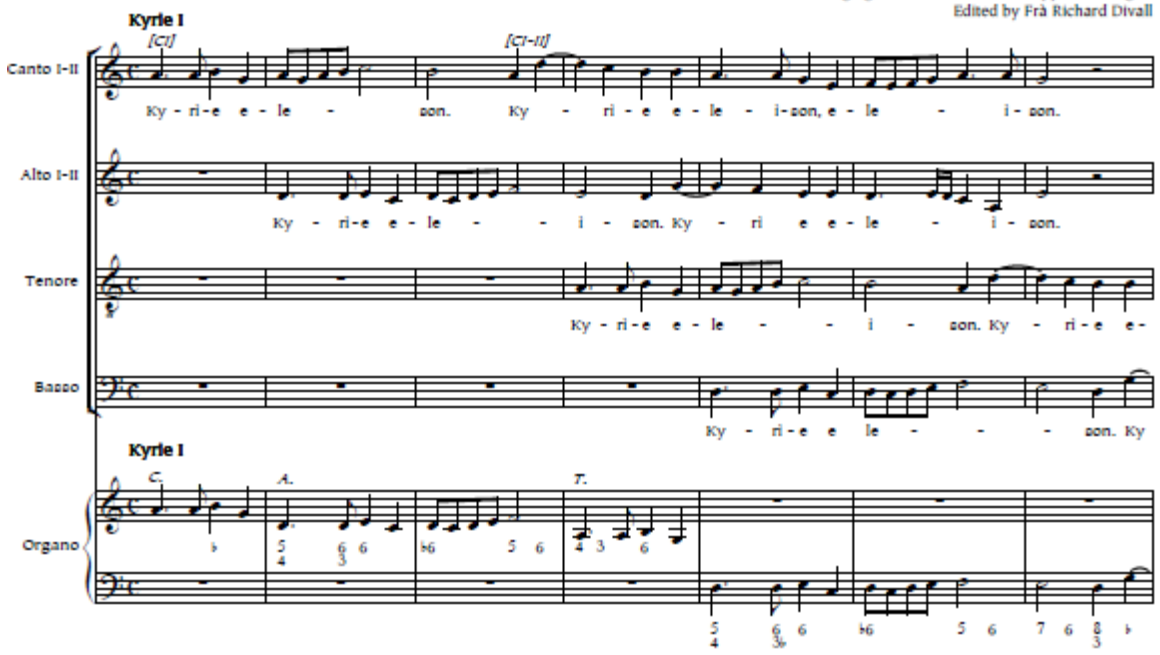
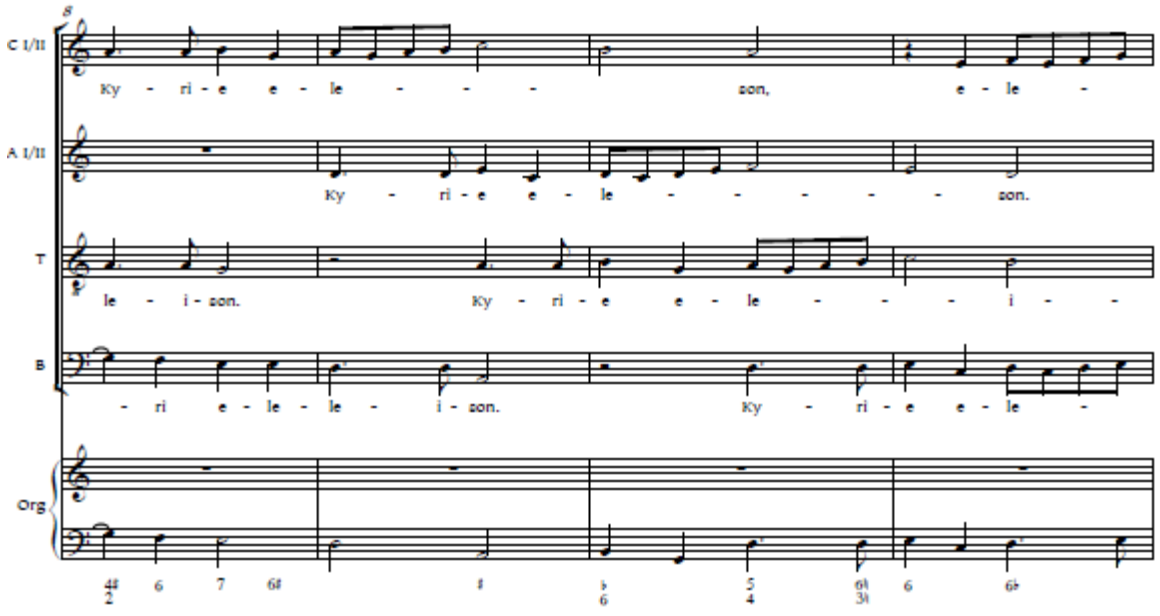
e Chiesa Conventuale di S Giovanni - Valletta, Malta.
MS 49 Congregatione dell' Oratorio Filippini - Bologna
Edited by Frà Richard Divall





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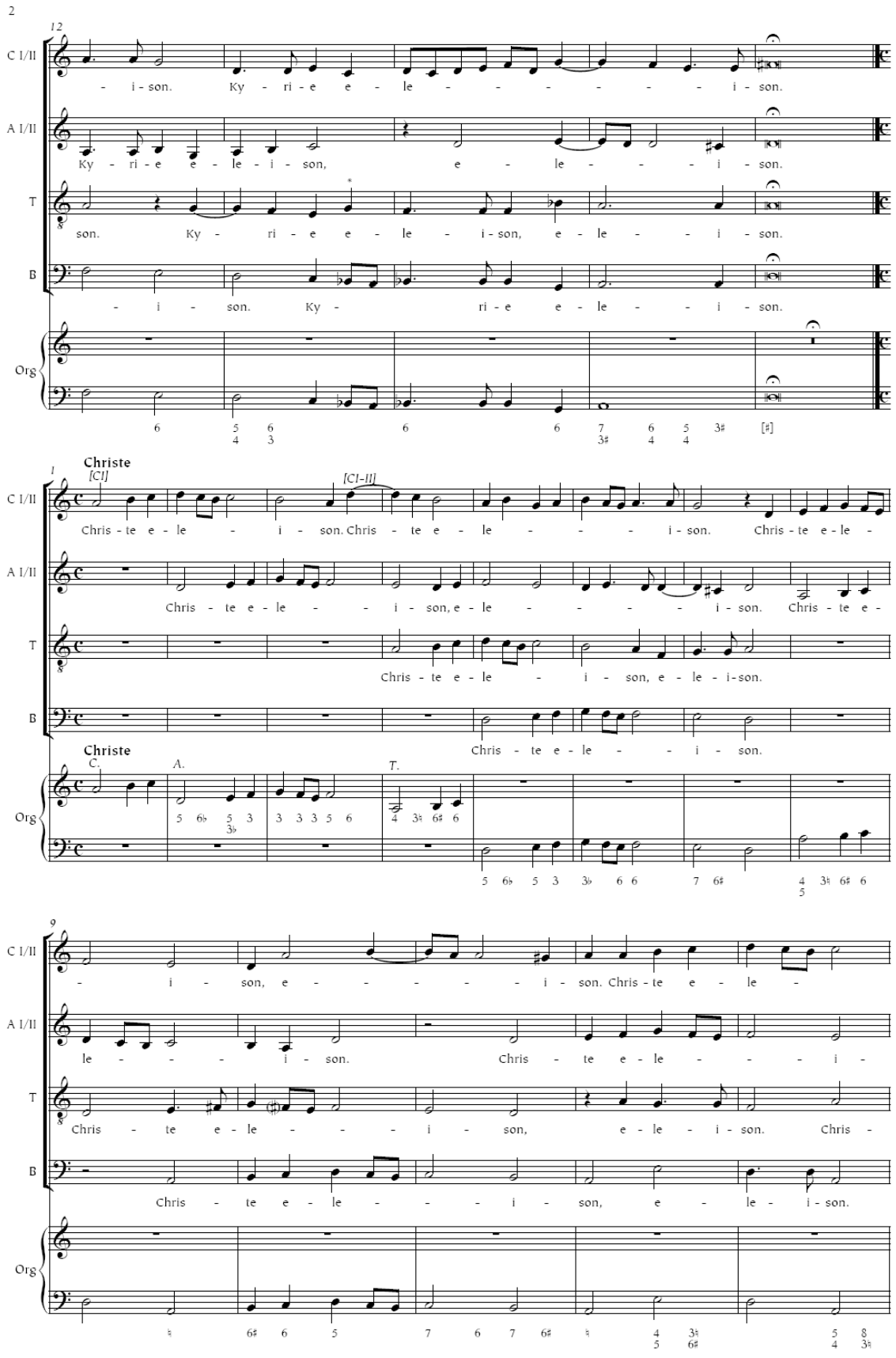
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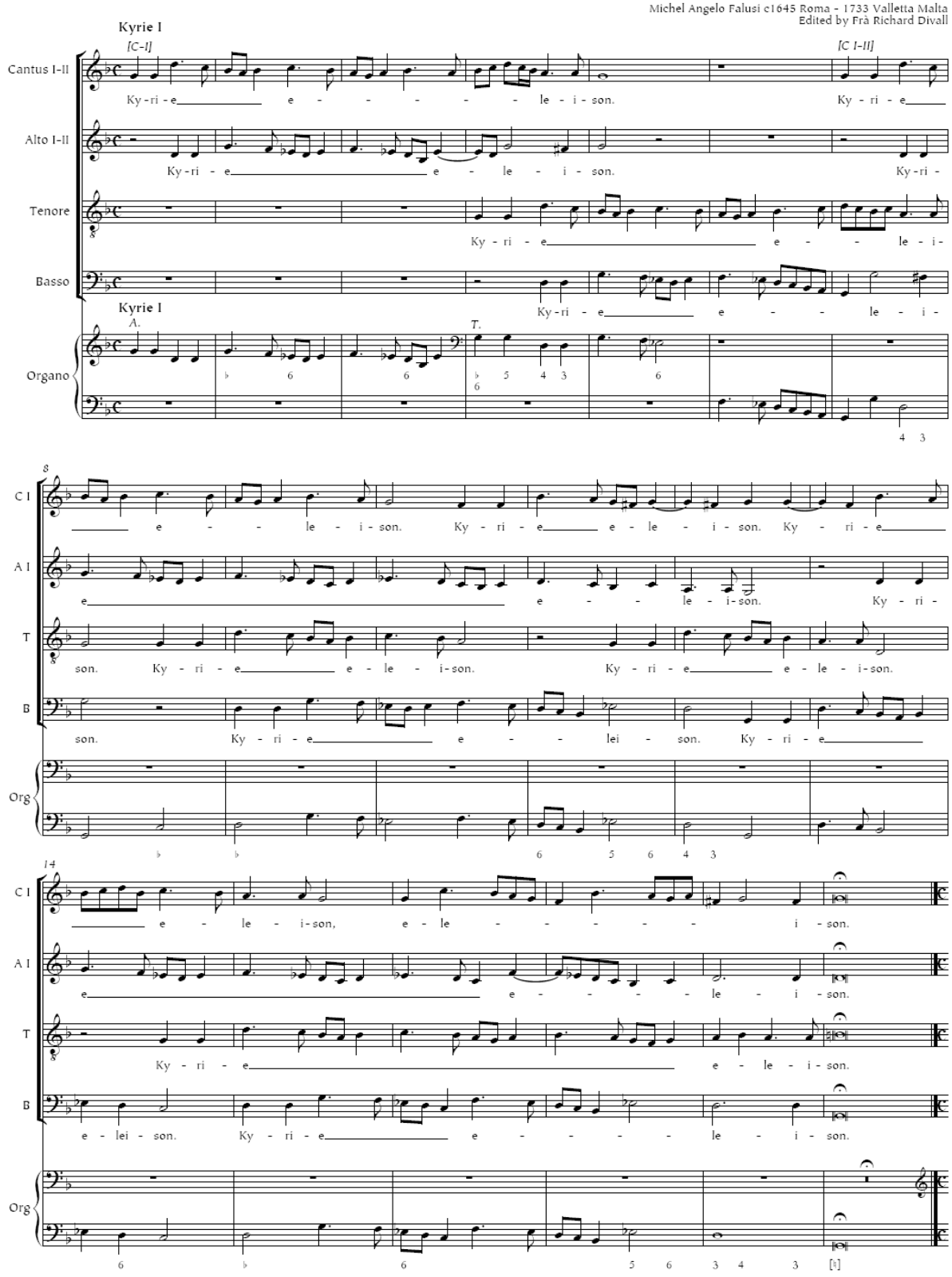
Missa a Secondo Tono

Michel Angelo Falusi c1645 Roma - 1733 Valletta Malta
Edited by Frà Richard Divall



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There is one other Maltese composer and musician who should be noted and that is Pietro Gristi (1696-1738). He was the first Maltese cleric to be sent to Naples to expressly study music. From 1713 to 1718 Gristi studied composition and counterpoint at the Conservatorio dei Poveri di Gesù Christo. This was significant for the Gesù was under the patronage of the churcg rather than the monarchy, and specialised in more old fashioned styles of music composition. After completing these studies Gristi returned to Malta where until his death in 1738 he held the position of *maestro di cappella* at the Mdina Cathedral.[131]

Three composers resident on Malta exercised some influence on the young Isouard. These include his two teachers, Michel' Angelo Vella and Francesco Azopardi, and also Benigno Zerafa. As his teachers, I will discuss both Vella and Azopardi in chapter two of the thesis, and later in chapter four the possible influences on Isouard, and patterns of liturgical settings evident in the surviving works of Azopardi and Zerafa. But some comment on the life of Zerafa, who was not a teacher of Isouard would be appropriate here.

Born on 25 August, 1726, and registered in the *Liber baptizatorum* of the Mdina Parish Archives, Benigno Zerafa (1726-1804), lived a long life.[132] After initial musical education as a *clericus chori* with Dun Pietro Gristi at Rabat, he studied at the Conservatorio dei Poveri di Gesù Cristo in Naples.[133] Gristi unexpectedly died in March 1738, and Zerafa, then at a very young age was appointed to succeed him, but only after studies in Naples, where fortified with the loan of 165 *scudi*, he entered the *Conservatorio* on 8 July 1738, at the age of eleven.[134] He was sufficiently well regarded in his studies to be given a testimonial by his fellow Maltese composer Girolamo Abos, who had been teaching from 1743 at the Conservatorio di Sant' Onofrio.[135] On his return to Mdina at the age of eighteen, Zerafa served as *maestro di cappella* at the Cathedral of St Paul in Mdina for forty-two years, from 1744 to 1786. A qualification to hold the post of *maestro di cappella* at the Cathedral was

[131] Sadly no music remains by this composer dating after his return to Malta. There is not one work surviving by him in the Mdina Cathedral Music catalogue, despite his long tenure at that cathedral.
[132] Mdina Parish Archives, *Libro Bapt*., volume 4 (1716-1751), 120.
[133] Dun Gwann Azzopardi. 'Beninju Zerafa', Il-Muźika Barokka ta` Beninju Zerafa (1726-1804), Programme for a concert in Sant' Agata ir-Rabat (Malta: Ministeru ta` L-Edukazzjoni u L-Ambjent, 1987), 9.
[134] Archivio Storico Diocesano, Naples. Azzopardi, Zerafa, 9. *'A 8 detto (July 1738) entrato Benigno Zerafa, maltese, posto da Sua Eminenza per alunno'.* The Cardinal at the time was Giuseppe Spinelli, who held the post 1735-1754. In 1761 he was named the Dean of the Sacred College, and died in Rome.
[135] Curia Episcopalis Melitensis, CEM, *Acta Originalia*, volume 294, 265-7.

that one had to be in holy orders.[136] He was also attached to the church of St Publius at Rabat, which was a church of the Order of Malta.[137] In 1969, Dun Gwann Azzopardi discovered, with one exception, a collection which belonged to the Gatt family of organists at the Mdina Cathedral, and that appears to be Zerafa's complete collection of manuscripts.[138]

One further composer is important and that is Vincenzo Anfossi. About thirty works survive by Anfossi, who was Isouard's elder colleague at the Conventual Church.[139] Possibly the brother of the famous opera composer, Pasquale Anfossi, Vincenzo served much of his life on Malta, and was appointed organist at St John's on 10 November 1791.[140] Previous to that appointment he served for some time as the maestro to the Grand Magistral court. Vincenzo's birth date is unknown but he died on 5 January 1796. Three sonatas for organ by Anfossi are said to be held in the Seminario Arcivescovile in Lucca.[141] In the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, a *Messe a 4 voci* is held and also a motet *Ecce crucem Domini*.[142] These scores might have come to Paris with Isouard, but they are not listed in the inventory of his possessions made on 6 April 1818.[143] Anfossi is said to have composed a cantata entitled *L'amore costante di Aci e Galatea* in 1770.[144]

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[136] Frederick Aquilina, 'A short biography of Beningo Zerafa (1726-1804): A mid-eighteenth-century Maltese composer of sacred music.' *Eighteenth Century Music*, 4/1 (2007): 112. Aquilina provides a fine analysis of Zerafa's composition style, 115.

[137] Aquilina, 114. St Pulbius' is built partly over St Paul's grotto in Rabat.

[138] The single exception to the collection at the Mdina Cathedral Museum is the Requiem for 4 voices and organ continuo, which is in the Wignacourt Museum. This work was found in December 2000 in a private collection by Dun Gwann Azzopardi, and has been edited by Richard Divall.

[139] Thirty-three of these are listed in RISM (http//www.rism.info/en/), and in other catalogues. They include settings of the Mass, and various sacred works, as well as a Sinfonia in D major and two secular arias. In the Braidense catalogue of holdings in Italian libraries, there are several works listed, including the three organ sonatas above. See note 129.

[140] Pasquale Anfossi was born in Taggia, in the province of Liguria, then part of the Republic of Genoa. After an important operatic career, Anfossi was appointed *maestro di cappella* in 1792 at St John Lateran in Rome, a position that he held until his death in 1797.

[141] I-Ls (B.287): Ms del sec. XIX, c. (2) obl. The attribution of the three sonatas to Anfossi in incorrect, and the one work that has the composer's name written on it, is clearly an early romantic work from the decade of the 1830's.

[142] F-Pn-Mus reserve MS-1984, and the motet FRBNF 39606507 Richelieu Musique ms 1977. The motet Ecce *crucem Domini* is cited on the F-Pn (Bibliothèque Nationale) site as coming from the 'collection of Nicolò Isouard'.

[143] Azzopardi, 77-80.

[144] Azzopardi and Sansone, 116.

Long term stability of employment on Malta, meant that a *maestro di cappella* of St John's, like Frà Giuseppe Sammartino, worked in Valletta for extended periods. After his studies at the *Turchini* in Naples, he commenced duties in the Conventual Church on 4 November 1724 - holding the position for 42 years. His nephew, Melchior, or Melchiore Sammartin, who also trained in Naples, succeeded him on 1 December 1765.[145] Much to Anfossi's and the young Isouard's exasperation, Melchiore Sammartin remained *maestro di capella* up to the French invasion and the dissolution of the *capella* by the republican administration on 30 November 1799.[146] The canons, declaring that they could not cope with the vicissitudes and the lack of food, departed the city of Valletta together with an exodus of 2,500 other souls. It was the tragic end of a glorious era.

Secular Music on Malta during the Rule of the Order.

Prior to the arrival of the Order, secular music on Malta was restricted to groups described as *joculatori alias joculari et suonatori*.[147] Instruments, such as the lute, viola, trumpets and drums, possibly tambours are mentioned, and these musicians, *joculari sive trubatori*, were sometimes employed in the militia and engaged to play in important festivals. The minor nobles who lived in Mdina might have enjoyed more refined musical activities, but nothing is mentioned in any sources.

From 1530, the situation somewhat changes and the performance and enjoyment of secular music became pastimes of the ruling elite on Malta. The knights, like a European 'United Nations', were drawn from most of Europe's noble Catholic families, and the cultivation of, and participation in music making was a normal part of everyday life in the Convent. This enjoyment of music was increasingly also undertaken by the Maltese nobility and the upper middle classes. In the 16th century music was performed in the *Auberges*, and musicians from the *cappella* of the Conventual Church and the Cathedral in Mdina were available to provide such musical activity.

[145] AOM 648, f. 342r., and AOM 999, f. 23v.
[146] Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta, *Diario Anonimo*, entry of 30 November 1799.
[147] Godfrey Wettinger, 'The Young Widow who Married Too Soon', *Melita Historica*, xii, 2 (1997): 149.

Prior to the construction of the Manoel Theatre in 1723, regular musical events were only given in the various *Auberges*, and in the Grand Master's household, which employed some chamber instrumentalists, and who would have doubled in service in the Conventual Church. The first opera to be performed on Malta was given only twenty-two years after the first performance in Mantua of Monteverdi's *Favola in musica, 'L'Orfeo'*.[148] According to records this first opera performed on Malta was an unnamed *dramma per musica* mounted by the Italian knights in their *Auberge* in Merchants Street, during the *carnevale* of 1631.[149] Unfortunately its title and the name of its composer are unknown, but it was a significant musical development for Malta. This was followed in 1650 when we know that the Italian knights allocated a budget of thirty *scudi* to facilitate the performance, with imported singers and some musicians from Italy of *un' opera tragica*, again in their *Auberge*.[150] The first named opera to be performed on Malta, in 1664, was *L'Annibale in Capua* by Vincenzo Tozzi (*b.* Rome c.1612; *d.* Messina c.1675).[151] The music is lost, but the printed libretto survives.[152] Tozzi, who was working as chapel-master from 1640 in Messina, was well known to the Maltese, and a considerable amount of his sacred music is found in the catalogue of the music holdings of the Mdina Cathedral Museum.[153] Dun Gwann Azzopardi notes that 'Tozzi was active in Malta, presumably in the 1650's or early 60's.'[154] The popularity of this composer on Malta is seen from the cathedral music inventory of 1710 -

[148] *L'Orfeo* of Claudio Monteverdi was premiered in February 1607 in the *Palazzo Ducale* in Mantua. This work was generally considered to be the first opera in operatic literature, but the matter is fully discussed in Nino Pirotta, *Opera in Seventeenth-Century Venice: The Creation of a Genre* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

[149] Vella Bondin, 'The Music of the Knights', *Melita Historica,* xii, (1999): 373-85. The *Auberge* of Italy was designed by the great Maltese architect Girolamo Cassar (1520-1592) and constructed from 1570 in Merchants Street. (The original name of the street in the seventeenth century was *San Giacomo*). The building now houses the Ministry of Tourism and Culture.

[150] A. G. Miceli, 'History of Opera in Malta', *Times of Malta,* 7 January 1972, 16. See Vella Bondin, *Music of the Knights*, 382.

[151] Joseph Vella Bondin, *Il-Muzika ta' Malta sa l-aħħar tas-seklu Tmintax* (Malta: PIN Pubblikazzjonjiert Indipendenza, 2000), 85-91.

[152] The printed libretto of the text by Nicolò Beregan or Beregani (1616-1684), is held in the Biblioteca Statale, in Lucca, Italy. Whilst in Messina, the composer Tozzi would have had contact with Malta through Sicilian members of the Order. The libretto was also set to music by Marc'Antonio Rossi and performed in Bergamo in 1668, as well as by Pietro Andrea Ziani (c1616-1684). Ziani, who was in holy orders, ended his career in Naples, and composed many operas for both his birthplace Venice and Naples. His *L'Annibale in Capua* was premiered in Venice in 1661. The story of the victorious Carthaginian general Hannibal would have pleased the Maltese audiences with their Punic ancestry, but not necessarily all of the knights from the various Italian States including Rome.

[153] (Dun Gwann) John Azzopardi and Matteo Sansone, *Italian and Maltese Music in the Archives at the Cathedral Museum of Malta* (Malta: Hill Monastic Manuscript Library and the Cathedral Museum, Mdina, 2001), 343-44.

[154] *Ibid*, 113.

recording that forty-six works are held, including many not found in the catalogue of works in *The New Grove*.[155] Currently the music catalogue of the Cathedral Museum in Mdina has fifty-eight works by Tozzi in their holdings.[156]

Like the painter Caravaggio, other aspiring members of the Order could apply for entrance, defraying the cost of their *passaggio* by musical performance. One was the *Nobile* Tomaso Ponso. Born in Messina in 1613, he was accepted into the Order as a *donato* or *confrate*. Proven as a *sonatore di violin parecchi*, and by performing with the *capella* of the Conventual Church, Ponso was exempted from payment of his *passaggio* of one hundred and thirty-four *scudi*.[157] This was done by service to the *capella nel sonar il violino per sei anni senza alcun stipendio come ha offerto altrimenti di pagar il passaggio intieramente e perder qualche havesse servito.*[158]

The construction of the Manoel Theatre in 1732, by Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena, allowed opera to be staged in a full baroque theatre. The first operatic premiere in the theatre was in 1735 with the *opera seria Artaserse* by Johann Adolf Hasse.[159] His other opera, *Demetrio*, originally composed in 1732 for Venice, was also given later in the first season of the theatre.[160] Other works mounted in the Manoel Theatre in the eighteenth century were Rinaldo di Capua's *opera seria, Vologeso, Re de' Parti.*[161] Presented at the Manoel in 1740, the work had only received its premiere in the previous year at the Teatro

[155] Franco Bruni, *Musica e Musicisti*, 301. Keith Larsen, 'Tozzi, Vincenzo', *The New Grove.*
[156] Azzopardi and Sansone, 343-44.
[157] The method of payment is interesting, as it was paid in Sicilian or Neapolitan currency, such as the gold *scudo*. This might be a normal practice, given that the violinist was from Sicily, the high volume of trade between the two islands, and that the Order had significant properties on Sicily including the galley base at Augusta. At the time Ponso was excused his *passaggio* money, the gold coin on Malta was the *zecchino*, and the gold *scudo* was not minted on Malta until 1756 in the reign of Grand Master Pinto. See Felice Restelli and Joseph Sammut, *The Coins of the Knights in Malta* (Valletta: Said, 1977), 159-163.
[158] AOM 5255, ff. 70-79. Ponso is also cited as a musical *sonando violinum* in the National Archives of Malta by Notary Joannes Tholosenti, R454/36 ff. 110v-111r.
[159] Johann Adolf Hasse (1699-1783). Hasse was one of the most prolific and successful composers of the eighteenth century. The first version of his popular *Artaserse* was premiered in Venice in 1730. The printed libretto of the Malta production is in the National Library of Malta.
[160] Paul Xuereb, *The Manoel Theatre – a short history* (Malta: Mid-Med Bank and The Friends of the Manoel Theatre, 1994), 17; 2nd edition 2010. Most appropriately the theatre was surmounted by a carved Latin inscription reading '*ad honestam populi oblectationem'*, or translated into English – 'toward, or for the honourable delight of the people'. See Xuereb, 4.
[161] Rinaldo di Capua's *Vologeso, Re de' Parti* has been published in a modern facsimile edition (New York and London: Garland Press, 1977). The only manuscript score of this work survives in the Yale University Library, Misc. MS 11.

Argentina in Rome. The same year saw productions of operas on Malta by Leonardo Leo and Pergolesi. The decade of the 1750s saw works presented by Pergolesi, the Maltese resident Tommaso Prota, Latilla and possibly Jommelli.[162] Prota, who was based on Malta, has his opera *L'abate ossia Il poeta moderno* staged at the Manoel Theatre in 1752 – possibly the first known instance of an opera being composed and staged on Malta.[163] Prota went on to have an active career, and a considerable amount of his music is found in various archives. Like Michel' Angelo Vella, Prota was a serious composer of chamber music and several series of trio sonatas for two flutes (or violins or oboes) and continuo as well as a flute concerto, three string sinfonias and *concerti grossi* survive.[164] Apart from three comic operas, and a setting of a *Prologo*, he composed little for the stage.[165] But there is a large scale cantata, *Tirsi e Doralice*, and a *Meditazione del Giudizio, dell' inferno, e del paradiso,* set for three solo voices and strings.[166] There is a possibility that some of his trio sonatas and several pieces of sacred music, including a *Salve Regina,* could have been composed on Malta.[167] He composed a *Calendimaggio* cantata on Malta, which is mentioned below.

The theatre administrators appointed by the Grand Masters, ensured that the repertoire kept pace with changing musical fashions, and throughout the 1780's works of Paisiello and Cimarosa were staged, often by visiting companies of Neapolitan singers. Antonio Salieri's *La grotta di Trofonio* and Pietro Guglielmi's *La virtuosa in Margellina* were presented in

[162] The composer, Tommaso Prota (b. 1727 Naples; d. after 1768). A fellow student of Tommaso Traetta at the Conservatorio di S Maria di Loreto, Prota served on Malta in the 1750's as a chamber musician and composer to Frà D. Giuseppe Carafa, the Prince of Columbrano. The introduction to Malta might have been facilitated by Girolamo Abos, who had succeeded Prota's father, Ignazio (1690-1748) at the Conservatorio S. Onofrio. Tommaso composed three operas, and a significant amount of instrumental and chamber music. Like Isouard, a composer nephew, Gabriele Prota, was a convinced Jacobin. Hanns-Bertold Dietz, 'Tommaso Prota'*, The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie, vol. 15 (London: Macmillan, 1988), 313, and Vella Bondin, *The Music of the Knights*, 385.

[163] Miceli, 32. The librettist of this comic opera in three acts is unknown, but the cast included Donato Miglionico, Maria Machera, Antonio Bacchini and Saverio Comite.

[164] The two Maltese born composers working in Italy, Girolamo Abos (1715-1760), and Giuseppe Arena (1707-1784), both composed chamber music. A Trio Sonata by Arena survives in an Italian library, whilst several copies of the six string quartets by Abos are to be found in German and Swedish libraries. (See the RISM Manuscript catalogue and the Braidense Catalogue of manuscripts located in Italian libraries).

[165] Prota's *Il Prologo* is set to a different text from the work set by Gluck, to the libretto of the *Bailli* Frà Lorenzo Ottavio del Rosso, and composed for Florence in 1767. Frà Lorenzo was a Knight of Malta. The manuscript of Prota's *Il Prologo* is held in the Music Library, Western University, London, Ontario, Canada, C-Lu.

[166] The autograph manuscript of the *Meditazione del Giudizio* is held in the British Library, GB-Lbm

[167] Tommaso Prota's opus one are a set of six trio sonatas, dedicated to Louis Charles de Bourbon, Count d'Eu, the Duke d'Aumale (1701-1775). Published in Paris in 1751 under the title *Premiere Livre de Trios pour les Violons, Flutes, et Hautbois,* these works have been edited by Richard Divall. The author has also edited the four trio sonatas for two flutes and continuo held in the Biblioteca comunale Luciano Benincasa, Ancona, I-AN.

1787.[168] Two works by the locally based Vincenzo Anfossi were even mounted, being his *opera seria Nitetti* and in 1791 his *scena lirica*, *La rupe di Leucate*.[169]

Although many sacred cantatas were set to music on Malta, one other form of secular music enjoyed a long tradition there, and these were cantatas presented as part of the *Calendimaggio* festival. These celebratory festive works were performed at dusk in the Palace Square on the 30 April each year, and forty-four printed librettos survive dated between 1720 and 1777.[170] There is one cantata libretto that survives in manuscript from the rule of Grand Master Perellós dated 1713.[171] Another is the text by Count Gian Antonio Ciantar of the cantata *Dialogo da Cantarsi per la solenne festività del S Angelo Custode*, set by Tommaso Prota.[172] The Order commissioned many authoritative composers to provide scores for these texts, whose printed libretti produced by the Order's printing press, were placed in the Library of the Order. These include the Neapolitan Gianpaolo di Domenici (c1706-1740), who at the age of twenty wrote the cantata for 1726.[173] This was followed by works by Giovanni Antonio Giai (1727 and 1728), Matteo Capranica (1748) and Gianbattista Lampugnani (1753).[174] The Maltese, Frà Filippo Pizzuto and Don Michel' Angelo Vella also composed works in this series, to texts by Grand Master de Rohan, but sadly their scores have not survived.[175] The *maestro di cappella* of St John's, Melchior Sammartin, composed eight cantatas in the series - five of them to texts by the Maltese poet and historian, Ciantar.[176] Nicolò Isouard is cited as having composed eight cantatas, also to texts by Grand Master de Rohan.[177] It is regrettable that, like Isouard's Maltese period operas, none of the music of these cantatas survives.

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[168] Pietro Guglielmi was to be important in securing Isouard the commissions in Livorno and Firenze for his first two operas, *L'avviso ai maritati* (Florence 1794), and *Artaserse* (Livorno 1794).
[169] Xuereb, 33.
[170] V. Laurenza, 'Calendimaggio settecentesco a Malta', *Archivum Militense*, ii, 18-19, (1913-1914): 187-203.
[171] NLM Lib 19, ff. 272-278.
[172] NLM Misc. 247 No. 9.
[173] A cantata for solo soprano by Gianpaolo di Domenici is held in the British Library in an MS miscellany.
[174] Giovanni Antonio Giai or Giay (1690-1764) was born in Turin and enjoyed a successful career in opera composition. Gordana Lazarevich, 'Giai, Giovanni Antonio',*The New Grove* cites the second cantata being for the year 1729. Both Matteo Capranica and Lampugnani had successful careers in music in Italy.
[175] Azzopardi and Sansone, 117. The titles of Vella's cantatas include *Astrea e Pallade* (1740), *La virtù trionfante* (1741) and *La Giustizia de Nettuno e la Religione Gerosolimitana* (1746).
[176] Ciantar, the scientific savant, poet and historian, was the author of the 1778 study *Malta Illustrata* and three other studies. See Giovanni Mangion, 'Giovan Antonio Ciantar, letterati maltese del Settecento', in Giovanni Mangion*, Studi Itali-Maltesi* (Valletta: Said International, 1992): 89-97.
[177] Azzopardi and Sansone, 116.

There is one question that remains unanswered, concerning the music manuscripts of the Conventual Church in Valletta. Whilst the music holdings of the Cathedral in Mdina survive, very few manuscripts remain of the library of sacred music from St John's. Perhaps one suggestion might be found in the period of the French occupation and the subsequent revolt of the Maltese. In Valletta, during the 1798 siege, General Vaubois had given orders that the Archives and other papers of the Order of Malta were to be used as wadding for the cartridges of the French artillery – *'pour en faire des cartouches….pour faire des gargousses'*.[178] It was only due to the courage of the *Uditore* of the Order, Frà Gaetano Bruno, that this disaster concerning the great collection of manuscripts was avoided. Dating from 1100 AD, and almost complete to 1798, the Archives of the Order of Malta (AOM) survive to this day.[179] However, not so fortunate was the fate of the music stored in the Manoel Theatre, or the music library of the Conventual Church. The exact details of the disposal or dissolution of these two musical sources is not exactly known. Dun Gwann Azzopardi suggests that the neglect by the Maltese themselves of music manuscripts and some other heritage archival materials may be part of the answer. But the order given by Vaubois on 15 July 1798 might provide one possible and partial answer, about the disappearance of so great a source of Maltese music.

[178] AOM 6523B, f. 138.
[179] Camilleri, 31, n. 6.

Epilogue.

Like the Papal States and the various church principalities of Catholic Europe, under the rule of the Order, Malta essentially meant that the state was the church, and the church was the state.[180] At this time Malta was a small enclave, a bastion, but one which witnessed 'an elegant and cutthroat confrontation between three ecclesiastical institutions.'[181] All civil authority and religious power were in the hands of three competing ecclesiastical authorities: the Order, the Maltese Church, and the Roman Inquisition. Despite this, it was a society which was ruled and not entirely motivated 'through military force or political power, but through one sole act: that of love or charity.'[182]

Earlier writers gave their conclusions concerning the Order in the eighteenth century, as one of decline and fall. But with access to wider sources, current historians are tending to see the final fifty years of the Order of Malta, as one of continued development, and that its fall and eviction from Malta, was caused by radical changes in the political stability of Europe. These were forces that were beyond the capacity of the Order to address or redress. The Order was certainly aware of these political developments, and under Grand Master Pinto had attempted to gain rights over Corsica, to broaden its activities.[183] This apprehension and possibly desperation on the part of the Order, is best seen in the attempted intervention of Frà François Gabriel de Bray, their Ambassador at the Congress of Radstadt in 1797.[184] He had suggested to Talleyrand, that the Order and Malta be protected by uniting the Teutonic Order with the Order St John. This was obviously to gain holdings of large scale properties in Germany and Austria, which would compensate for the loss of the French commanderies that had been sequestered by the Directorate.

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[180] These church states included Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin in France, Liege, Mainz, Trier, Cologne and Salzburg in The Holy Roman Empire. They were abolished in the early revolutionary period, beginning with the Comtat Venaissin in 1791, and in the later Napoleonic reconfigurations of Europe.

[181] Giovanni Bonello, 'Patronage by the Knights of Malta', *Histories of Malta – Passions and Compassions,* vol. 10 (Valletta: Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, 2009), 62-73.

[182] Bertrand Galimond Flavigny, *Histoire de l'Ordre de Malte* (Paris: Librairie Académique Perrin, 2006), 10. Flavigny is referring to the charism of the Order - and that is, to serve 'Our Lords, the Sick'.

[183] Carmel Testa, *The Life and Times of Grand Master Pinto 1741-1773* (Valletta: Midsea Books, 1989), 310-313.

[184] Thomas Freller, *The Anglo Bavarian Langue of the Order of Malta* (Pietà, Malta: Pin Pubblikazzjoni Indipendenza, 2001), 182, 192-3. Alain Blondy, 'More about the *Recherce Historiques et Politiques sur Malte*,' *Journal of Maltese Studies'* (1993): 212-14.

Even after the confiscation of these commanderies, the Order owned considerable properties throughout Europe, which continued to financially sustain the administration and the defence of the islands. But the Enlightenment and the political rationalism of the times, now challenged the old practices of aristocracy and privilege, as had been enjoyed by the Order for centuries. Accordingly, the crisis came not from the Ottomans, but from the Order being increasingly deprived of a majority of its properties on the Continent, severely truncating the annual incomes sent to the Convent on Malta. Starved of funds, and without any hope of naval or military support from other rulers in Catholic Europe, the Order was in no state to resist the invasion by Napoleon and his overwhelming French forces in 1798.[185]

It was into this interesting and fascinating world that Nicolò Isouard was born on 16 May 1773.

[185] Indeed, it was against the charism of the Order, for the Order as an entity to fight against another Christian ruler.

Chapter Two - Nicolò Isouard.

'The luck of having talent is not enough;
One must also have a talent for luck'.[1]

The early career of Nicolò Isouard, as musician and composer, was facilitated by several different and, at times, unexpected influences. These included his attachment to the French cause and the Jacobin ideas sweeping Europe. His connections and those of his family, with the legal and clerical entities ruling Malta, or present there at the time - namely the Order of Malta, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Roman Inquisition - were also important. Additionally his association with Freemasonry must be considered, together with his relationship with fellow masons, some of whom were utilised to assist Isouard achieve success in his chosen career in music.

In the absence of direct evidence, the context of Isouard's early development can be illuminated to some degree, by details, as we know them, of the careers and music compositions of his teachers. They provide material relevant to his own development as a composer - first of sacred music and then of *opéra-comique*.

These seemingly disparate threads, when gathered together, clarify Isouard's career path, leading toward his subsequent career from 1800, as an opera composer in France. They show him to have been born in Valletta in 1773, into a large and well established family, who had migrated some generations earlier to Malta from Marseilles, France.[2] Possibly through the influence of his colourful and opinionated father, and also his mother, he developed an interest in politics, ambition, the Jacobin cause, and Freemasonry.

[1] Hector Berlioz (1803-1869).
[2] Frans Said, 'Nicolò Isouard, a great Maltese composer', Valletta: *The Sunday Times,* 25 March 2012.

1.

The Isouard Family.

Nicolò Isouard, or to give him his full name, Joannes Joachim Edoardus Nicolaus Isouard Xuereb, was born on 16 May 1773. The birth is recorded in the baptismal register of the Parish of St Mary of Porto Salvo (St Dominic's), Valletta.[3] His father was Fortunato Isouard Xuereb and his mother, Elena Maria or Maria Helena. The godparents are given on the birth certificate as *Dnus Joachim Arena* and *Dna Theresia Lombar(do),* the latter presumably Fortunato's wife's mother. The godfather was possibly Joachim Arena, who was a rich merchant and draper, based in Valletta with established shipping interests in Genoa and Lyon. Like Isouard's father, Fortunato, Nicolò's godfather was also known to the Maltese Inquisition.[4] The Latin text of the birth certificate reads:

Ego Frater Franciscus Vassallo Lector et Vice-Parochus baptizavi infantem natum heri ex Domino Fortunato Xuereb Isuard et Maria conj. de nostra Paroecia, cui impositum fuit nomen Joannes, Joachim, Eduardus, Nicolaus. Patrini fuerunt Dominus Joachim Arena et Theresia Lombar.[5]

Until 1991, his date of birth has been contentious, and for reasons that are not entirely clear. The entry by Marie Briquet and David Charlton in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music* (1988 edition), gives the date as 6 December 1775.[6] Before 1991 and in the absence of the details of his above birth certificate, this date may have been based on information from the 'Act of Identity', and an 'Act of Notoriety' that Isouard and his parents' signed in Paris on 19

[3] Archives, Porto Salvo, Valletta, vol. 10, f.98. It was a traditional Maltese custom to choose any of the baptismal names for everyday use. That tradition is still in practise on Malta. The church of Santa Maria di Porto Salvo is in Merchants Street, beside St Dominic Street in Valletta. It was established there under the Dominican Order of Preachers in 1569 and on 2 July 1571, Pope (St) Pius V, who was also a Dominican, gave it the status of a parish church. It was canonically erected as a priory in 1612.

[4] AIM. AC 543, fols. 1r-2v.

[5] Dun Gwann Azzopardi, *Nicolò Isouard de Malte* (Mdina, Malta: Friends of the Cathedral Museum, 1991), 18. (Hereafter cited as *Azzopardi*). Translated reads: I, Frà Francisco Vasallo, Lector and Deputy of the Parish baptize the child born yesterday to 'Sir or Lord' Fortunato Xuereb Is[o]uard and his wife Maria, of our Parish, and who has been given the names Joannes, Joachim, Eduardus, Nicolaus. The Godparents are 'Sir' Joachim Arena and Theresia Lombar[do]. *Dominus* and *Domina* are polite Latin terms used on Malta at the time, to denote the gender of 'gentlefolk', or people of higher social status.

[6] Marie Briquet/David Charlton, 'Isouard, Nicolas ', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1988).

October 1811. This was witnessed by no less than seven witnesses, after sighting similar declarations made at the time by Isouard's father and mother, both of which had been registered *en brevet*.[7]

Both of these documents were first published in the seminal exhibition catalogue entitled *Nicolò Isouard de Malte*,[8] edited by Canon, later Monsignor John (Dun Gwann) Azzopardi.[9] Dun Gwann Azzopardi is not to be confused with Francesco Azopardi, the composer and one of Isouard's teachers.[10] This now rare volume remains an essential starting point and unequalled reference for any scholar or researcher on Isouard and his music. Even today it remains the only serious study of the composer, including aspects of his life, career and musical output.

Returning to Isouard's date of birth, we note that past editions of the Riemann *Lexicon of Music* and Fétis *Dictionaire de Musique* gave the year of Isouard's birth as 1775 or 1777. In the first brief thesis and study of Isouard's life, submitted to the Royal Bavarian Ludwig-Maximilians University of Münich in 1906, the German musicologist Eduard Wahl makes the same mistake, in giving 6 December 1775 as the composer's birth date.[11]

To compound the problem, the inscription on the composer's tomb, situated in the Pere Lachaise Cemetery in Paris (Section XII, opposite Section IV), reads:

NICOLÒ ISOUARD, NÈ EN 1777, MORT EN 1818.

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[7] *Azzopardi*. Doc. 2 and 3. pp. 61-2.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] This volume of eighty-eight pages was published under the auspices of the Friends of the Cathedral Museum, in Mdina, of which at the time of publication in 1991, the editor was the Director. This book contains three chapters: first, *Nicolò Isouard: Identity,* by Dun Gwann Azzopardi; second, *Nicolò Isouard: His Years in Malta,* by the Maltese musicologist Joseph Vella Bondin, and third, *Nicolò Isouard and the European Political Context,* by Professor Alain Blondy of The Sorbonne. Also in this volume is a catalogue of *The Exhibits* that accompanied the exhibition held in 1991 at the Mdina Cathedral Museum, and a listing of some thirty-one documents covering Isouard's life, ending with part of the inventory of his possessions and scores that were sold after his death. Apart from some twenty-seven facsimile reproductions of title pages of operas, and some songs and manuscript excerpts, there are brief catalogues of the composer's operas and sacred music, as well as title pages etc., of scores composed by his daughters, Anne Nicolette and Sophie. They were also composers in their own right. In this thesis, this book will be referred to simply as *Azzopardi*.
[10] Francesco Azopardi -The Maltese composer, and one of Isouard's teachers on Malta (1748-1809). His surname was spelled with only one *Z*.
[11] Eduard Wahl*, 'Nicolo Isouard, sein Leben, und sein Schaffen auf dem Gebiet der Opéra-Comique'.* (München: Ludwig-Maximilians University, pub. Druck von Wolf und Sohn, 1906), 6.

Nicolò was the second of fourteen children born to Fortunato Isouard Xuereb and his wife, Elena Maria (Maria Helena) Lombardo. Born in 1745, the father, Fortunato, son of Giaconda (Jean-Jacques) Isouard Xuereb and Eugenia Formosa, led an eventful life.[12] Even before they were married, apparently Fortunato had quarrelled with his mother over the fact that he had seduced his future wife Elena Maria.[13] Banished from his parents' home he was sent to live in virtual exile in the house of his grandparents Giacomo and Eugenia, situated on the Barriera Wharf, in Valletta.[14]

The couple were married on 9 January 1771.[15] This had been preceded the day before, by an attestation in a *Stato libero* by Fortunato, confirming his unmarried status.[16] This was a declaration that had to be presented before contracting a marriage, in accordance with Maltese law, by persons who had lived abroad for some time.[17] Four witnesses confirmed the document, but none of them later featured as godparents to any of the children of the marriage. Nonetheless, they provide an interesting indication of the Isouard connection with France and new French political ideas. One of them was Giuseppe (Joseph) Maurin, who will appear in the next section concerning the Maltese Inquisition.

The Isouard family had migrated to Malta from Marseilles, where the composer's great-grandfather, Fortune (or Fortunato) Isouard, a merchant, had married Antonia Maria Xuereb, the daughter of 'a Maltese squire'.[18] This French connection was important, for French commercial interests were a substantial presence on the island. Commerce and shipping with France was important, and in 1788, forty-three per cent of merchant shipping

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[12] AOM. 654, f.14. In *Azzopardi*, the portrait of Isouard's grandfather, Giacomo is illustrated in black and white, p. 30. A colour reproduction of this painting is to be found in Alain Blondy, 'L'Ordre de Saint Jean de Jérusalem et les Maltais – 1 – Les Projets du Chevalier Charles Sébastien de Choiseul (168401734), in *Société de L'Histoire et du Patrimoine de L'Ordre de Malte,* Bulletin 2013, No. 28, 69.

[13] Carmel Testa, *The French in Malta* (Valletta: Midsea Books, 1997), 216, n.25.

[14] AOM 654, f. 217.

[15] Archiepiscopal Archives *Publicazioni di Matrimoni*, vol. 5, f. 584.

[16] Louis de Boisgelin de Kerdu. *Ancient and Modern Malta (*London: G. and J. Robinson, 1804). Vol. 1, 81. *Marriages were always entirely arranged by the parents; who consulted their own interest, and the suitableness of the connection, without attending to the inclinations of their children.* Here possibly lies the reason for Fortunato's act of public seduction, and the fact that the Lombard family were against any union with the Isouard's through marriage. A second edition of Boisgelin's book was published in two volumes by Richard Phillips of London in 1805. That edition deletes the valuable listing of the names and *Langues* of the Knights of the Order, who were resident on the Islands at the time of the French Invasion.

[17] Cathedral Museum, CEM, AOP, vol. 31, f. 123-128.

[18] Frans Said, 'Nicolò Isouard'. But in *Azzopardi* the first and second wives are listed as Rosa Maria Piazzese and Anna Paiach. *Azzopardi,* 14.

flew the French flag, compared to seven per cent British. France was also the main source of manufactured goods that were imported to Malta.[19] For the Isouard's there were strong family connections with the cities of Palermo and Augusta in Sicily. Augusta was a base for supplies for the naval squadron of galleys and frigates of the Order of Malta, as well as being a commercial centre that dealt with imports and exports from the Islands.[20] There were also established family links with both Marseilles, where his father's brother Joseph married in 1771, and as mentioned, with the Sicilian city of Augusta, where close relatives had resided from 1755.

The Order of Malta had a considerable presence in and around Augusta. It possessed large estates in Leontini, four miles from Augusta, and had established magazines and bakeries there for victualling the Order's galleys.[21] It was in Augusta, during the great earthquake and tsunami of 1693, that the withdrawal of the sea by some sixty metres caused the galleys of the Knights to be stranded on the seabed. They were then severely damaged by the ensuing, incoming tsunami, which reached a height of twelve metres. As usual, the Order sent relief supplies to Sicily to assist. One thousand, eight hundred and forty deaths were recorded in Augusta from this earthquake.[22]

Nicolò's father, Fortunato was employed by the Order in the management of their government warehouses (the *Massa Frumentaria)*, under the direction of the knight Frà Jean-Constant de Campion de Montpoignant.[23] The surname of Isouard, or rather its variant Isoard, was not new to the Order. From 1578 to 1742, no less than nine men, bearing the surname Isoard de Chénerilles were admitted as Knights of Justice in the Order.[24] Through his life, Nicolò's father preferred the spelling of his surname as Isuard, as seen on the composer's baptismal certificate. His immediate employer, Frà Jean-Constant had entered the Order of 16 April 1753, and was well disposed toward the Isouard family.[25] As a patron he was to facilitate the financial sponsorship that enabled the young Isouard to travel for

[19] Desmond Gregory, *Malta, Britain, and the European Powers, 1793-1815* (Mass: Associated University Presses, 1996), 49.
[20] Anton Quintano, *The Maltese-Hospitaller Sailing Ship Squadron 1701-1798* (Malta: PEG, 2003), 145-146.
[21] Patrick Brydone, *The Present State of Sicily and Malta* (London: 1788), 68.
[22] Mario Baratta, *I Terrimoti d'Italia* (Turin: 1900, reprinted Bologna: Forni, 1969).
[23] Louis de la Roque, *Catalogue des Chevaliers de Malte* (Paris: 1891), 45. De Montpoignant reached the rank of *Commandeur*.
[24] *Ibid,* 122.
[25] Nicolas Victor de Saint-Allais, *L'Ordre de Malte* (Paris: 1839).

the first time to Paris, to study. Together with Grand Master Emmanuel de Rohan and the *Bailli* Frà Paul-Julien de Suffren, he was amongst important Frenchmen in the Order who were cultivated by, and who actively assisted the Isouard Xuereb family.[26] There were others.

Nicolò's father had a strong influence on the young man's political ideas, but not on his artistic ambitions. References to Fortunato are recorded in a couple of diaries made by travellers to Malta. One favourable mention of him is in 1776, in the diary of Jean-Marie Roland de la Platière, who describes him as, 'a very honourable and kind-hearted man'.[27] At the time of this visit, both men toured the Maltese countryside and admired the churches and their paintings. Roland De la Platière (1734-1793), later to be the French Minister of the Interior in Louis XVI's cabinet of 1792, was introduced into Maltese society by the Chevalier (later *Le Bailli*) Toussaint de Vento des Pennes,[28] and the port inspector Antoine Poussielgue.[29] He took part in their evening receptions, dances and musical evenings, where no doubt he would have met the very young Isouard.[30] At a later date Roland de la Platière would write of the atmosphere of their family home and their cultured friends:

> *Les jeunes gens vont dans les maisons parce qu'on y reçoit généralement les Chevaliers (…); on y cause, on y danse et l'on y fait beaucoup de musique. Celle de M. Isouard et sa femme est une des belles de la ville*.[31]

[26] Frà Paul-Julien de Suffren, and Isouard's patron was appointed Lieutenant-General (Commodore of the Sailing Ships), on 23 June 1785. AOM 163, f. 226 and AOM 274, f. 54. He had succeeded Frà Giovanni Battista Tommasi, who was later appointed Grand Master on 13 June 1805 by Pope Pius VII.

[27] Thomas Freller, *Malta and the Grand Tour* (Valletta: Midsea Books, 2009), 299.

[28] Testa, *The French in Malta*, 85 n.7. At the time, des Pennes was a good friend of the French Knights and Jacobin sympathisers Frà Jean de Bosredon de Ransijat and Frà Deodat de Dolomieu. A witness to the French invasion of Malta and to the duplicity of these two French knights, des Pennes became their enemy. Because of his age he was allowed to remain on Malta by the French, and he died in Valletta on 16 February 1800. De Vertot spells the surname des Vento-Pennes.

[29] The Poussielgue Family were a prominent family with pronounced Jacobin sympathies. They were to be a consistent presence throughout all of Nicolò's life, and after his death as well.

[30] After hearing that his wife had been guillotined as a Girondist, he committed suicide.

[31] Jean-Marie Roland de la Platière, *Lettres écrites de Suisse, d'Italie, de Sicile et de Malte par M***, avocat en Parlement, de plusieurs académies de France et des Arcades de Rome, à Melle** à Paris, en 1776, 1777 et 1778*. (Amsterdam: s.n, 1780). 6 vol., t. III, 77. 'The young people go to the homes because that is generally where they receive the Knights (...); they chat, they dance, and they make much music. That of Mr Isouard and his wife is one of the most beautiful of the town'.

2.

Family Background – The French Connection and the Freemasons.

There can be no doubt that the Isouard Xuereb family had pronounced Jacobin sympathies. They were inherited by their son Nicolò. Fortunato's mother, Eugenia, *née* Formosa, came from a line of people with entrenched political tendencies against the status quo on Malta. The declaration of the *Stato libero* by Fortunato Isouard in 1771 provides some insight into his French connections. As has been said, this form of declaration was submitted by persons who had lived overseas, in order to avoid possible bigamy in marriage. In this case, three of the witnesses bore French surnames and the fourth (Francesco Arena) was married to a Frenchwoman. Another one of the witnesses chosen for this document is particularly interesting.

Giuseppe (Joseph) Maurin, President of the East Municipality of Valletta, was in charge of the dockyards at Senglea. Born in Valletta in 1754, Maurin had been sent to France by Grand Master de Rohan to study shipbuilding. He later became the chief shipwright of the Order, being in charge of the construction of both the galley *S. Maria La Vittoria* in 1792 and of the sixty-four gun ship of the line, the *S. Giovanni*.

During the rule of the Order, Freemasonry was banned on Malta. Giuseppe Maurin's name was amongst the list of Knights, Canons of the Conventual Church and Maltese nobility mentioned as Freemasons, in the *Processo Lante* of 1776, initiated by the then Inquisitor Mgr. Antonio Lante.[32] Antonio Lante Montefeltro della Rovere (1737-1817), the nephew of a Cardinal, had arrived on Malta, to take up the post on 13 April 1771.[33] He left Malta for Italy in 1777 and after a distinguished career in the church was created a cardinal in 1817, the year of his death.[34]

After Napoleon's invasion, many years later, Maurin's name was also the first on a list, distributed about Valletta in June 1798, and entitled – 'A list of those who betrayed their

[32] A. J. Agius, *History of Freemasonry in Malta 1730-1998 (*Valletta: Stiges Ltd., 1998), 11.
[33] Another member of the della Rovere family, Prince Ludovico Chigi Albani della Rovere (1866-1951) was elected Grand Master of the Order of Malta on 30 May 1931.
[34] Michael McCarthy, *Heraldica Collegii Cardinalium* (Sydney: Thyacaline Press, 2006), 39.

country'.[35] The paper was headed: 'R. I. P. Made by the Maltese citizens against those rodent members of the Municipality and the Commission of the Government'. There was a definite link between the names of Freemasons known to Lante and those Knights, and others who were later open supporters of the new French Republic. Compromised by his association with the French during the occupation, Maurin, like the Isouard family, elected to go to France in 1800 with the repatriated French forces and their sympathisers.

With the installation of the French Republican Government on Malta on 14 June 1798, Fortunato's employment position significantly improved. Soon after the occupation, the *Università dei Grani*, was reorganised to the benefit of the French regime, and by a decree issued by Napoleon on 18 June 1798, was renamed the *Casse des Subsistances Civiles*. The important position of President of this body, which governed all food storage and the import/export of food materials on Malta, was to be given to an official who was sympathetic to the government of occupation. The French Governor of Malta, General Claude-Henri Belgrand de Vaubois (1748-1839), accepted the suggestion that Fortunato Isouard Xuereb be chosen, and to receive an annual salary of 3,000 francs.[36]

Because of Isouard's previous character problems on Malta, several prominent investors in the *Università* fund complained about Fortunato's appointment. The complainants included members of the Maltese aristocracy (Testaferrata Sant, Parisi etc.), and some administrators of Church properties including the Prior of the Conventual Church of St. John, Frà Raimundo Albino Menville.[37] These complaints caused an open rift between Isouard's good friend the French Commissioner, Regnaud d'Angely, and the Governor and Commander in Chief, Vabois. In the meantime, Isouard's other close collaborator, the port inspector, Antoine Poussielgue was recommended to be appointed as the senior authority in charge of finances at the *Università*. This proposal from d'Angely led to an impasse between the Governor and Commissioner, when Vaubois refused to accept the scheme.

[35] Testa, *The French in Malta*, 245.
[36] *Ibid.* 211.
[37] AOM 6523, f. 74-5.

Fortunato, seeing the complications that his proposed appointment was creating, took an unusual step. Needing to support his wife and numerous children, on 23 July he pleaded illness and asked for a cash advance on his salary (1,500 francs), against his being able to take up the position at a later stage.[38] Honour was preserved by the subterfuge of a delaying tactic. The negative community reaction to Fortunato holding such a position must be seen as an indication of the way in which his moral character and unsavoury reputation were viewed on the Island. For Fortunato, it would have been a publicly embarrassing development in such an enclosed society, that so many complaints were received in opposition to his appointment as President of the *Università*.

Another family who were to be constant friends with the Isouard Xuereb family, and also with Nicolò throughout his life were the Poussielgue family. Antonio (senior), had assisted in lending funds to the German Knight, Frà Ferdinand von Hompesch (later Grand Master from 1797), when he was a *Bailli* of the Order. Poussielgue's son, Matthias was a wealthy banker and also held the position of port captain of Valletta. Matthias had been appointed by Grand Master de Rohan as Consul on Malta, for Corsica, Sardinia and Genoa, Tuscany, the Republics of Ragusa and Venice, and Austria-Hungary. Being in a key position, Matthias had the capacity to obtain useful information. His cousin, Henri Poussielgue, was the senior secretary to Guillaume Charles Faypoult (1752-1817), the head of the French Legation in Genoa, and also the head of the spy ring in Malta, that also included his brother Joseph, as well as Matthieu.[39] In this they were supported by the French Consul living on Malta, Jean André Caruson.[40] Together with the Poussielgue family, Consul Caruson, was assisted by a group of French Knights with strong Jacobin tendencies, Deodat de Dolomieu, Bosredon Ransijat and Antoine Bardonnenche, all of whom were providing information to Napoleon.[41]

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[38] AOM 6523, f. 266.

[39] The surname is occasionally spelled as Faijpoult or Fajpoult. Later, as Commissioner for Naples, Faypoult was instrumental in the abolition of the considerable estates in that kingdom of The Order of Malta, as well as those of the Farnese and Medici familes. John A. Davis, *Naples and Napoleon* (Oxford: OUP, 2006).

[40] Blondy in *Malta and France*, cites his surname as Carusson. He was to provide damning reports to the Commission of Foreign Relations in Paris.

[41] Frà Déodat de Dolomieu (1750-1801), famous French geologist and Knight of Malta. He accompanied Napoleon to Egypt. Frà Jean de Bosredon de Ransijat was received into the Order on 10 July 1753, as a page, and was promoted to *Commandeur* in 1783. Nicolas Victor de Saint-Allais, *L'Ordre de Malte* (Paris: 1839). After the French occupation he was made president of the Municipality of Valletta (De Lavigerie, 167).

Henri Poussielgue was sent directly by Napoleon to report on the situation on Malta, and to provide strategies to effect the easy capitulation of the Order to French forces. His report, written in Milan on *Le 20 Pluviose Year VI* (8 February 1798), is devastating in its assessment on the inability of the once great Order, to defend Malta from invasion.[42] In this report to Napoleon, Poussielgue concluded that only force could win over Malta. It contains one sentence that would have been an essential to Napoleon and his plans for Egypt. It says, 'First and foremost, Malta is the key to the Levant....Politically speaking, he who controls Malta, controls the commerce of the Mediterranean...It is another Gibraltar'.[43]

The Poussielgue family remained close friends and confidants of the Isouard's. As late as 19 October and 30 November 1811 two brothers from that family, Mathieu and M. Joseph, witnessed the statements by Nicolò, attesting to his date of birth (inaccurate as it was).[44] This was in preparation to his marriage to Claudine Berthault on 11 January 1812. I add that on 6 April 1818, on the Inventory of the property of the deceased Nicolò, his wife's surname is spelled *Berthaut*.[45] In the *Declaration de Succession* of 28 August 1818, one of the Poussielgue brothers is listed as an executor of Nicolò's estate, and one who supervised the contents of the remaining property, to the sum of 46,478 *francs* and 28 *centimes*.[46]

Later in the allied siege of Valletta, Fortunato Isouard briefly figures in a report written by Vice-Admiral Denis Decrès, which reads: 'During that day (11 January 1799), some Greeks warned the General that there was a conspiracy against the French, and, according to them, it was bound to erupt at any moment. Isouard, a Maltese employed in the administration of the Università, also came forward to warn Vaubois, who issued some orders to verify'.*[47]* Isouard, senior, who had retained his presidency of the *Università,* had totally thrown in his

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César-Pierre-Alexandre de Bardonnenche joined the Order on 22 April 1774, and stayed on Malta serving in the French artillery (De Lavigerie, 166). Olivier De Lavigerie, *L'Ordre de Malte depuis la Révolution Française* (Paris: Bourloton, 1889).

[42] Joe Scicluna, *Malta Surrendered -The Doublet Memoires and the Poussielgue Report (*Valletta: Allied Publications, 2011), 5-17.

[43] *Ibid.* 15.

[44] *Azzopardi.* 62-3.

[45] Paris*. Archives Nationales*, M C/Et. LXII, 825 and *Azzopardi*, 77.

[46] Archives de Paris DQ7 3001 – *Successions et mutations, no. 734 du août 1818.*

[47] Decrès Report. ff.90-100. Cit. Testa, *The French in Malta*, 480.

lot with the French invaders, and from this time onwards, both Fortunato and his son Nicolò seen as collaborators by Maltese patriots.

3.

The Isouard Family and the Inquisition.

Throughout his life, Nicolò Isouard would demonstrate attitudes to faith and religion that were decidedly unorthodox, and generally contrary to accepted practices on Malta. These led to Nicolò being denounced to the Inquisition on Malta, whilst his father actually appeared before the Inquisition. The position of Inquisitor on the islands and the introduction of that post in 1561 was an initiative that was not entirely welcomed by the Grand Master, or individuals among the knights of the Order. During the rule of the Order, prior to 1798, the presence of three religious entities on Malta created many problems. These entities were the Grand Master of the Order of Malta (as an independent prince of Malta), and through him the Grand Prior of the Order, the diocesan Bishop of Malta, normally resident in Mdina, and the Inquisitor, who was safely based on the other side of the Grand Harbour in the Birgu. The Cathedral Museum of St Paul in Mdina holds the archives of the Roman Inquisition on Malta, and that collection is especially valuable, as it is one of only two complete sets of Inquisitorial archives in Europe.[48]

The office of Inquisitor on Malta was a stepping stone for ecclesiastical promotion. Several Inquisitors based on Malta went on to be elected Pope, namely Fabio Chigi as Pope Alexander VII (1655-1667), and Antonio Pignatelli as Pope Innocent XII (1691-1700). Chigi's correspondence has been published.[49] The role of the Inquisitor on Malta was twofold. It guarded against the introduction onto Malta of heresies and superstitions. This included keeping a watchful eye not only on visiting Protestants, but also any wayward religious inclinations or misdemeanours of the Knights, their employees or the general population. One irritation was that the presence of the Inquisition was a significant check on the power and the prerogatives of the Grand Master of the Order. The Inquisitor also acted as the official spokesman of the Pope on Malta. Like today's Papal Nuncio on Malta, at the time he

[48] Another duplicate set of digitised copies of the Maltese Inquisition archive is held in the Hill Museum and Monastic Library at St John's University, Minnesota, USA.

[49] Vincent Borg, *Fabio Chigi – Apostolic Delegate in Malta 1634-1639* (Citta del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1967).

reported to the Holy See on matters concerning the Church, but also on the government and activities of the Order.

Fortunato Isouard Xuereb became the object of some interest by the Inquisition on at least two occasions. The first was in 1771, when he was accused of having 'violated Maria Lombardo and of abducting her, dressed up as a man to the Public Theatre'.[50] One quotation from this Inquisition document reads: ...*che in qualità di Scolare entrava nella Casa delli coniugi de Lombard[o] si è abusato, e toltole dalla casa la Figlia travestita, e condotta in Publico Teatro per trionfare ivi coll' iniquità de gioia diletti*. Fortunato seduces his pupil, but thwarts any attempts by the girl's family to hush the matter up, by publicly displaying her *in travestita* in a common theatre, and in triumph!

This unsavoury episode is presented in a four page document held in the Archives of the Maltese Inquisition.[51] Appealing to the *Tribunale della Regia Monarchia*, the complete saga is outlined including the descriptive *trovare uno sposo eguale ò migliore dello Stuprante, Seduttore e Rapitore.* The obvious solution to such emotional and lustful violence was for their immediate marriage – possibly the result that had been planned from the beginning by Fortunato. Having been publicly branded as a 'rapist' in the Inquisitorial court would not have been a recommendation for Fortunato's reputation on Malta. Whilst this incident might seem extreme, marriage customs on Malta were at times curious. An agreement of marriage was often privately contracted, and even without the presence of a priest, no 'public ceremony was needed for a valid marriage'.[52] Malta was a traditional and enclosed society, where parents generally assisted to find suitable partners for their children. Obviously Fortunato had intended to upset the cosy family arrangement, and abduct the daughter from her family, in a deed that rendered any previously arranged marriage of his partner impossible. A religious ceremony would follow. Indeed it was not unknown on Malta, for young unmarried women to entrap young men into a forced marriage.[53] The

[50] AIM. Corr. 96, f. 200r., and Frans Ciappara, *The Roman Inquisition in Enlightened Malta* (Pietà, Malta: Pin Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2000), 139.
[51] AIM. Atta Civilia 540, ff. 246r-247v.
[52] Frans Ciappara, 'Private life, religion and enlightenment in Malta in the late eighteenth century', *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 71, (1994): 109.
[53] Ciappara, 'Private life', 111. The Parish of Porto Salvo, and Isouard's family base in Valletta had a startlingly high rate of illegitimate births. Between 1750 and 1800 the figure stood at 25.7% of all births. This is

second episode occurred with regard to the father being suspected of having taken vows as a Freemason. Nicolò Isouard was also accused of this misdemeanour by an acquaintance, who denounced him to the Inquisition on 9 April 1794.[54] At the time Isouard was in Livorno, supervising the premiere of his second opera *L'avviso ai maritati*. The accusation made by his colleague stated that he was a Freemason, and that he did not believe in the Eucharist. [55] Nicolò was certainly a Freemason in the Valletta lodge. Several documents in the Inquisition papers in the Cathedral Museum attest to that fact.[56] Vella Bondin suggests that as many of the French Knights belonged to the Valletta Lodge, the Lodge of St John of Secrecy and Harmony, and then it was probable that some of these members may have been of real assistance to the young Isouard.[57]

The list of members of this Lodge in 1792 included both the Chevaliers De la Tour du Pin-Montauban, Frà Charles de Saint Priest (The Captain of the Galleys), and Doublet (The Grand Master's French Secretary),[58] as well as two priests of the Order, Frà Antonio Longo of Messina,[59] and Frà De Parieu (possibly Frà Victor-Antoine de Pardieu).[60] Neither of the two Isouard names appears on this list, and we will possibly never know how important this connection was.[61] Pierre-Jean-Louis-Ovide Doublet, who was the secretary to the Lodge, was practically de Rohan's chief secretary, and for his services in the formation of the Anglo-Bavarian Langue in 1782-3 was admitted as a *Donat* by the Grand Master.[62] It is due to him and his eyewitness report, later published, that we know much of the background details of the French Invasion.[63]

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extraordinarily high, when considering that the second highest incidence of illegitimate births in a parish was that of 6% in Vittoriosa (The Birgu). The average rate of such births on the rest of the islands was an average of 1.2%. Ciappara, 'Private life', 114. More often than not, illegitimate children were left at the Foundling Hospital in Valletta.

[54] The new Inquisitor at the time was the Roman, Mgr. Giulio Carpegna, who had taken up the position in the Birgu on 24 January 1793. He was the last Inquisitor on Malta and departed in April or May 1798.

[55] AIM *Processi Criminali*, vol. 141. Item 6, ff. 167-170.

[56] AIM *Processi Criminali*, vol. 141, item 6, ff. 167-170.

[57] Agius, Lodge No. 539. E.C. 175.

[58] *Ibid.* 177.

[59] *Ruolo,* 102.

[60] Louis de la Roque, 181.

[61] Joseph Vella Bondin. 'Nicolò Isouard – His Years in Malta'. *Azzopardi,* 22.

[62] Thomas Freller, *The Anglo-Bavarian Langue of the Order of Malta* (Pietà, Malta: Pin Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2001), and Scicluna, *Malta Surrendered*.

[63] Scicluna, *Malta Surrendered*.

4.

Early Studies on Malta and in France.

Nicolò Isouard was fortunate in the patronage that he received from individual Knights of the Order of Malta, and his succesful career owed much to their support. Fortunato Isouard's employer, the superintendent of the Order's warehouses, Frà Jean-Constant de Campion de Montpoignant, financed Nicolò Isouard's initial travel to study in Paris. A member of an old family from Normandy, Montpoignant had had a long career in the Order on Malta, starting life there on 16 April 1753 as a page to Grand Master Emmanuel Pinto da Fonesca. He was later promoted to a *Commandeur*, (*Commendatore)* in the Order. His brother Frà Anne-Georges had also entered the Order in 1759.[64]

Isouard was sent to study in Paris at the Pensionnat (Institut) Berthaud, which was a preparatory school for Engineers and Artillery, in both the army and the French Marine. The School, directed by M. Berthaud had an excellent reputation. One of its most celebrated graduates was General Mathieu Dumas, who had a long career in the Bourbon army, and then served under Napoleon and finally under the Restoration of Louis XVIII.[65] Sadly, little is known of any of Isouard's musical or military studies. The latest entry in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music* by Marie Briquet and David Charlton notes that the young Isouard was taught Latin, drawing and mathematics at the Berthaud. I suggest that it is probable that Nicolò had already studied music on Malta, with either Francesco Azopardi or Michel' Angelo Vella, both of whom were his teachers on his return to Malta.

Most biographies of the nineteenth century had repeated the same details of Isouard's first period in Paris, and that he studied pianoforte under the Parisian teacher 'Pin'. It is mentioned in several early sources that Nicolò enjoyed music as a hobby, additional to his more structured studies. But up to now, the identity of this music teacher had not been recognised. I suggest that the surname Pin, quoted in every main source, as being Isouard's

[64] Louis de la Roque, 45. Frà Anne-Georges also reached the high rank of a *Commandeur*, entitling him to the revenues of a Commandary in in the *Langue* of France.

[65] Lt-Gen. Comte Mathieu Dumas, *Memoires of his own time, in the Revolution, the Empire and the Restoration,* 3 Vols. (London: 1839), vol. 1, 1.

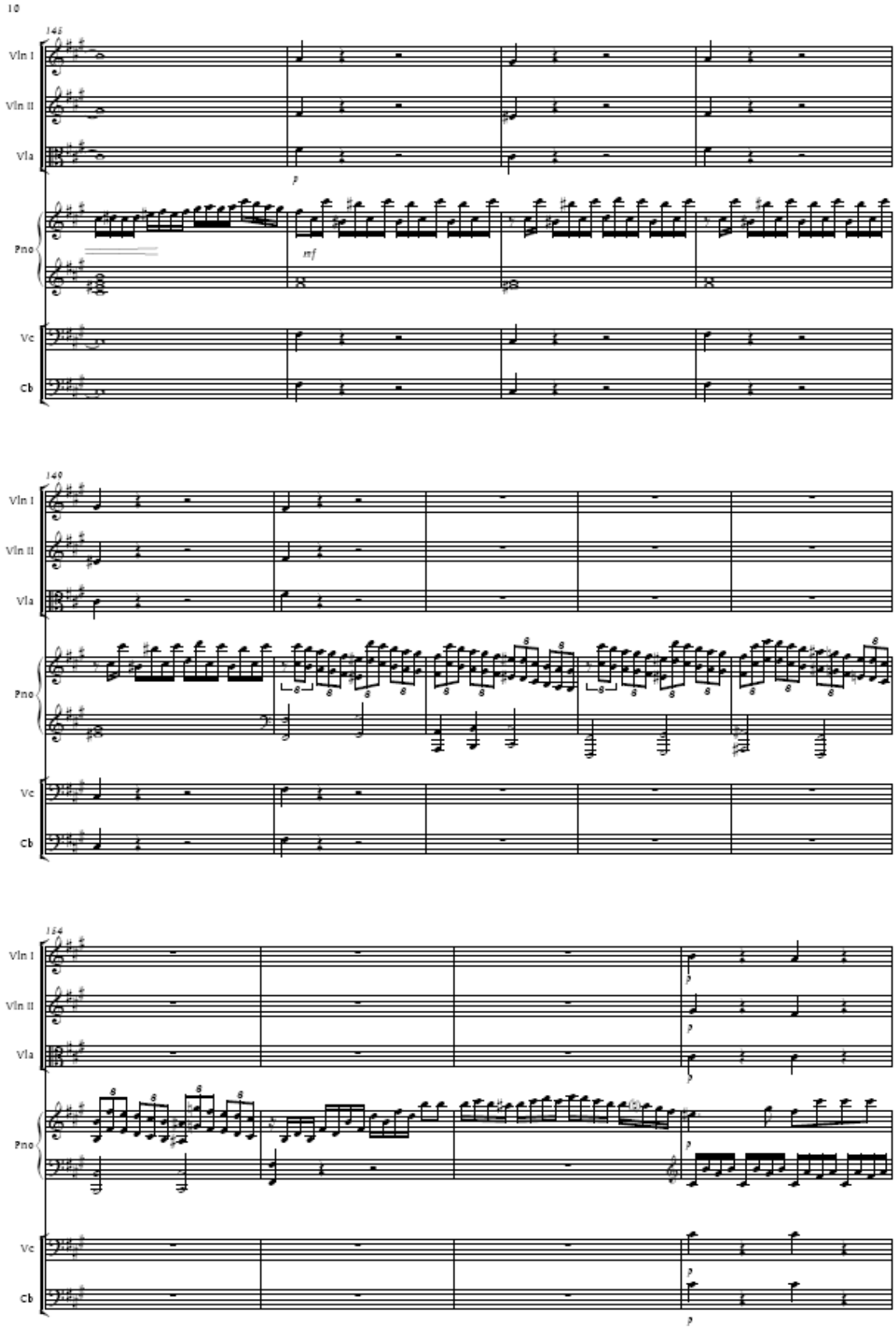
first music teacher in France, means the Paris based pianist and composer Henry-Noël Le Pin (or Lepin). His date of birth and death are unknown, but several of his compositions have come down to us. Even the spelling of his surname is problematic, for on three of the surviving printed works (the Concerto in A, and the two sets of Six Sonatas for Cello), the name is spelled Le Pin, but in the Bibliothèque Nationale music catalogue it is spelled Lepin.

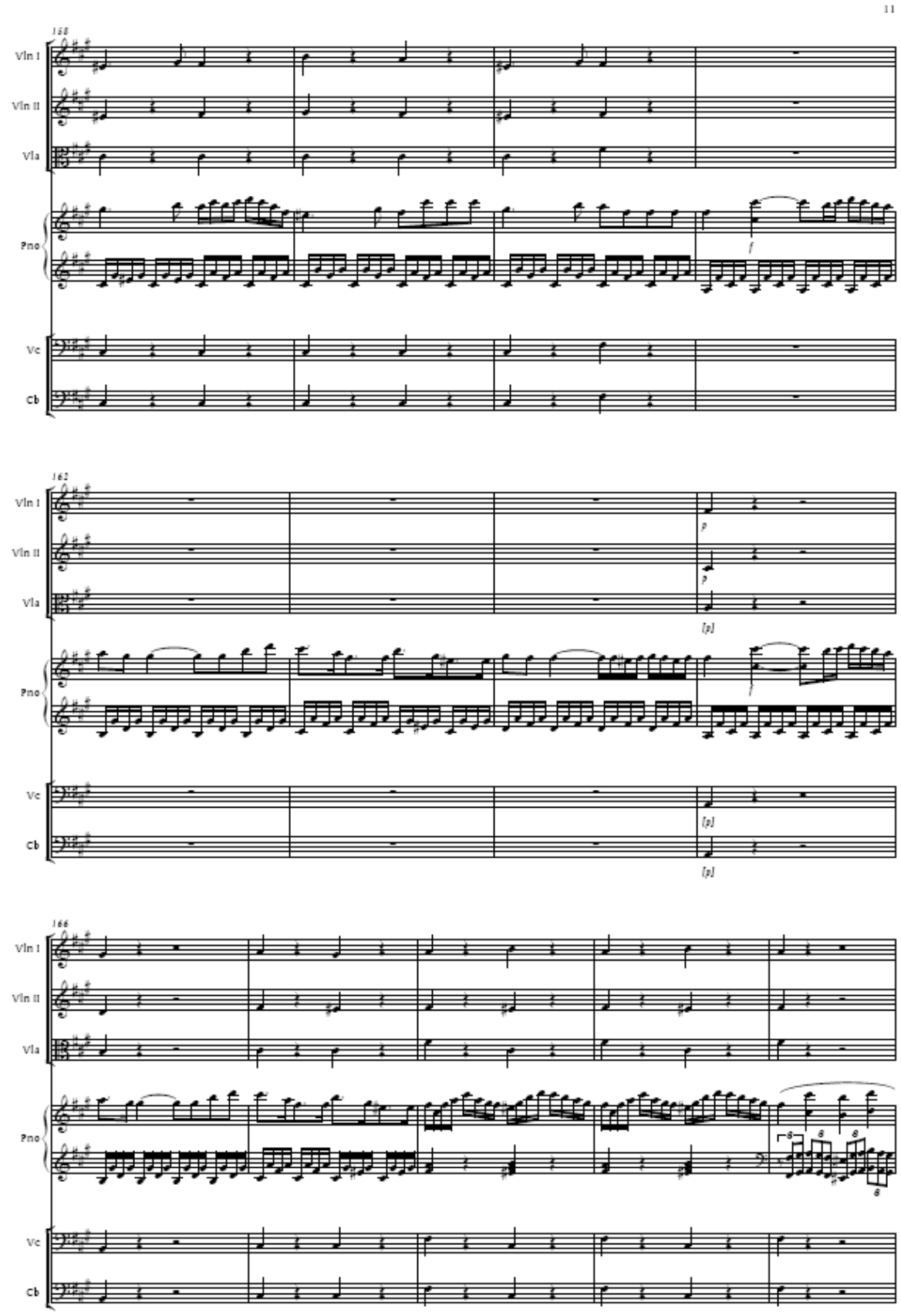
His Concerto for Pianoforte and Strings in A major has survived in a set of parts in the Bibliothèque National in Paris.[66] Published in the long series *Journal de Pieces de Clavecin par différens Auteurs*, by the music house of Chez M. Boyer, it appeared in 1788 as volume 59. For this exercise, it is an important piece, for it demonstrates the keyboard skills of the composer that Isouard would have been exposed to in his early lessons.

Le Pin's keyboard writing is well structured, and in pianistic terms, 'lies well in the hand', in performance. From this keyboard part in the concerto, and also the continuo accompaniment of the Six Sonatas below, one can see that Isouard would have been given advanced instruction in several areas of keyboard technique. These would have included the facility to have a flexible right hand, the ability to play rapid octaves and arpeggios, figured and Alberti bass, as well as the art of improvisation required for cadenzas and basso continuo.

[66] FBN. VM7-6032.

Le Pin. Concerto in A major.




11
158
Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Pno
Vc
Cb
162
Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Pno
Vc
Cb
166
Vln I
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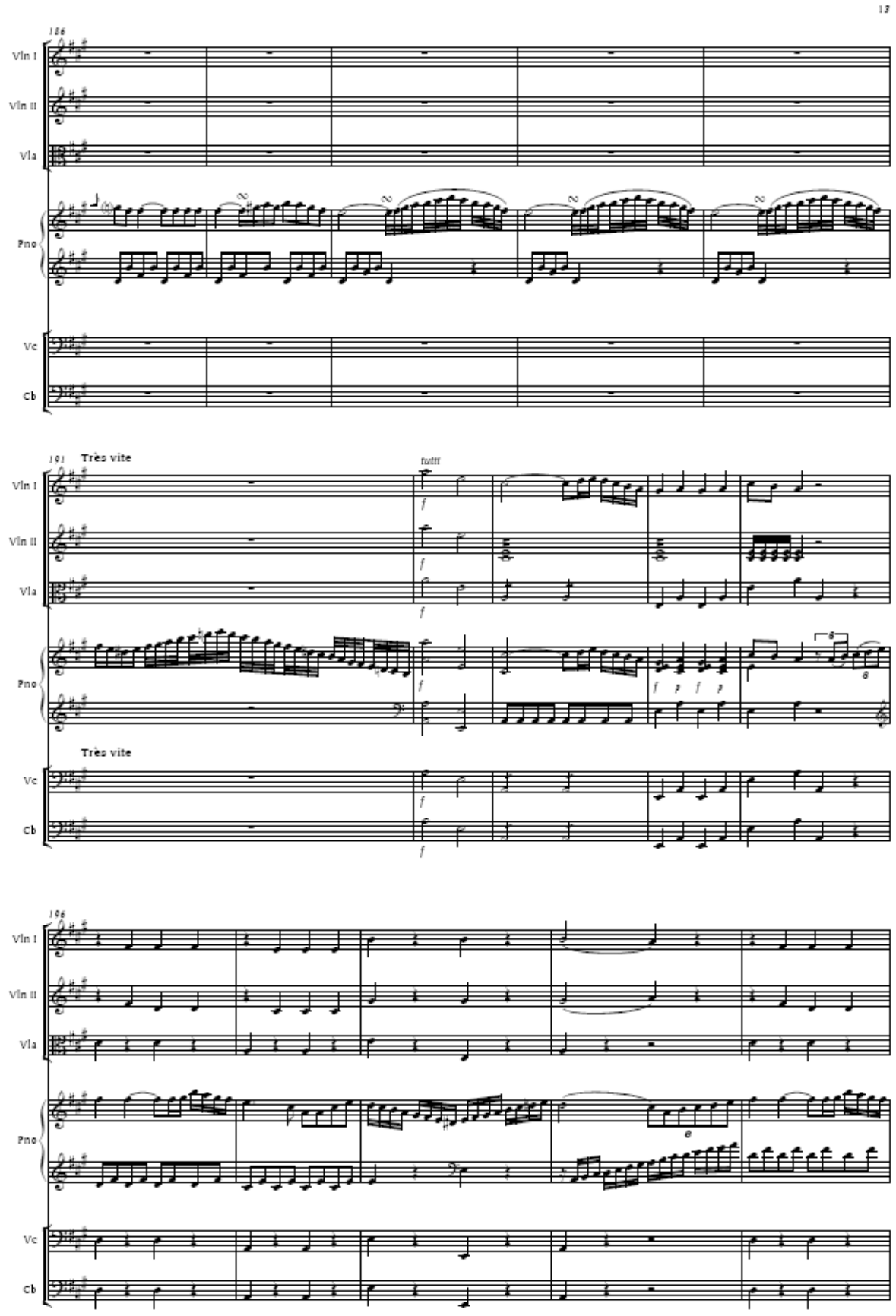
Vla
Pno
Vc
Cb


186
Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Pno
Vc
Cb
101
Très vite
tutti
Très vite
106

Several other works by Le Pin survive in print, including a *Sans un Petit brin d'Amour*. Also an *Air des Trois fermiers* (taken from an opera by Alexandre Dézède), and an *Air de Malbrouck* (The Duke of Marlborough's march), arranged for the *clavecin* as an air and variations, published in Paris by *Bailleux et chez l'Auteur*, in 1795.[67] References in publications and journals also point to Le Pin having been a composer of a range of works. In 1794 it is mentioned that under the name of Le Pin*,* 'a concerto was published in Paris for *clavecin* and strings'*,* and that also his opera *Acys et Galathée* was presented in 1787.*[68]*

There are two other published works by Le Pin which survive and one of them provides a few clues about the early patronage received by Isouard. That is a set of six sonatas for cello and continuo, published as his Opus One.[69] Issued in Paris in 1770 and consisting of a score of thirty-one pages, these sonatas were engraved by Gerardin, and were available *auz adresses ordinaires.*[70] The composer, Le Pin is described on the title page as simply, 'Amateur'. But this title page provides a couple of clues to the French connection - to the composer Le Pin, which can be linked, via the Order and Malta, to Isouard.

Securely embedded stylistically in the *Ancien Régime*, these sonatas were dedicated by the composer to Madame la Marquise de L'Estang. Her identity may be Aglaé Charlotte de Broglie, who married the Marquis Joseph de L'Estang-Parade. There is a gouache painting of the Marquise by the French painter Gabriel Jacques de Saint-Aubin (1724-1780). Saint-Aubin was both a painter and a musician, and during his time was a chronicler of Parisian life.

The L'Estang-Parade family had provided no less that fourteen members to the Order, some of whom had joined as early as the year 1500. I would suggest that both Isouard's employer Frà Jean-Constant de Campion de Montpoignant, and the Isouard family might have had contacts with two uncles of the Marquis, namely Frà Joseph-Guillaume-François-Gabriel de L'Estang-Parade and his brother Antoine, who both entered the Order in 1728. During the

[67] RISM LL 2030.
[68] Sainsbury and Choron, *A Dictionary of Musicians* (London: 1827).
[69] F. BN. VM7-6336.
[70] The other is Le Pin's Opus Two, a further six sonatas for the cello and continuo. An original copy is held in the British Library. GB-Lbm. Cat. No. G.511.a.(3). This second set, dedicated to the Duc de Laval has recently been published in 2007 by Editions Fuzeau Classique, Réf. 50117, ISMN: M 049 50117 0. In this new edition, the composers surname is spelled Lepin.

decade of the 1770's no less than six members of the L'Estang-Parade family were Knights of Malta.[71]

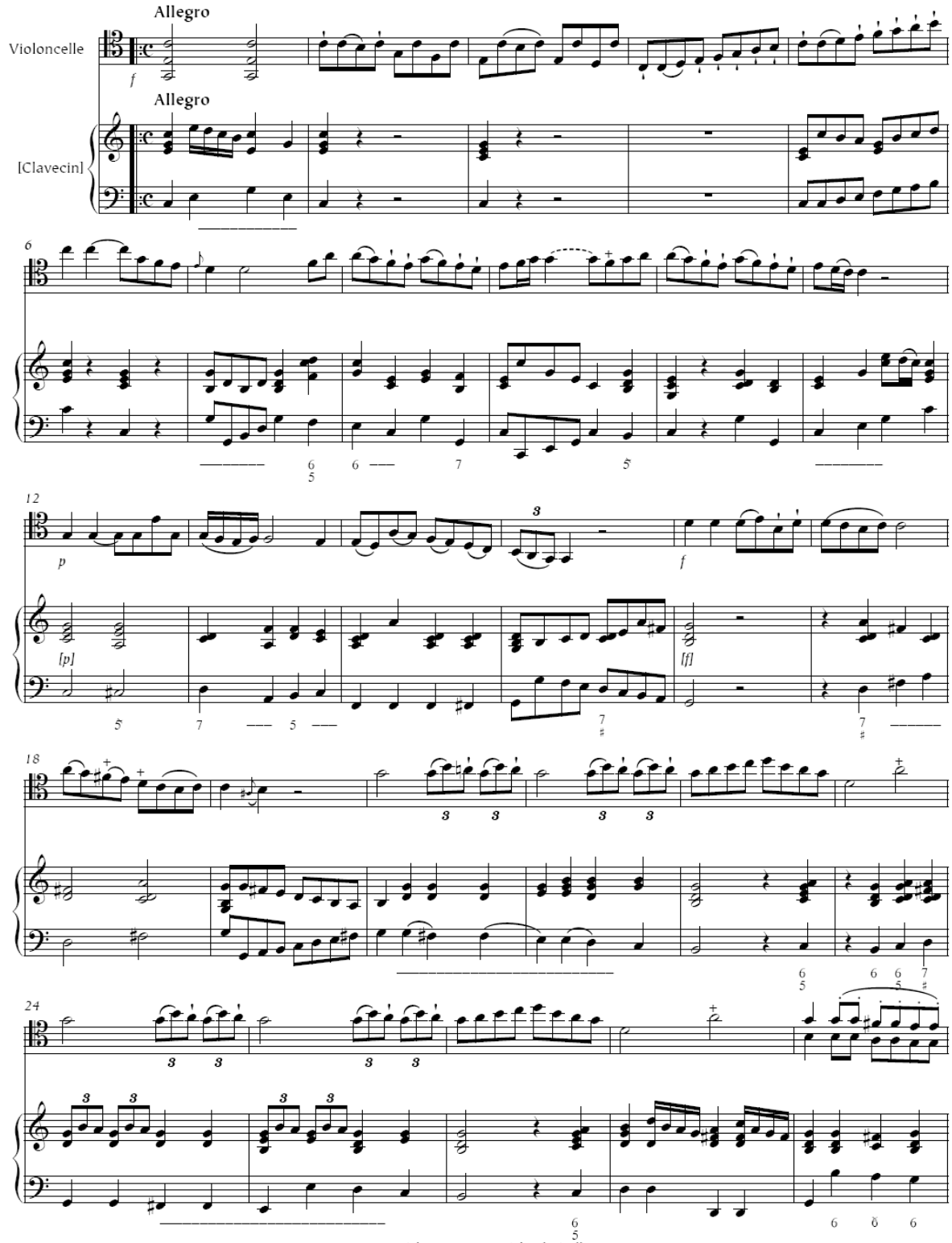
These family connections to the composer/teacher Le Pin might have made this musician a good choice to be Nicolò's teacher. As we have seen, Le Pin is mentioned as an *amateur* - therefore possibly a 'gentleman-teacher', and one who would be suitable as a teacher, to a private student studying military subjects at the *Pennsionat*. As a mentor, and a means of introducing the young Isouard to other musicians, as well as to the many concerts that were given in Paris, Le Pin's influence must have been decisive.

[71] De la Rocque, 146. The surname is also spelled Lestang-Parade. The portrait of Chevalier Alexandre de Lestang-Parade, by Jean-Antoine Gros (1771-1835), is held in the Musée Grobet-Labadie in Marseilles. The painting is reproduced as item 72 in the catalogue in *La Provence et l'Ordre de Malte* (Marseilles: Palais de la Bourse, 1981), 29.

Six Sonates a Violoncelle et Basse

Premier Oeuvre - Paris - 1770
Dédiéea à Madame La Marquise De L'Estang.

Henri-Noel Le Pin [17..-18..]
Edited by Richard Divall



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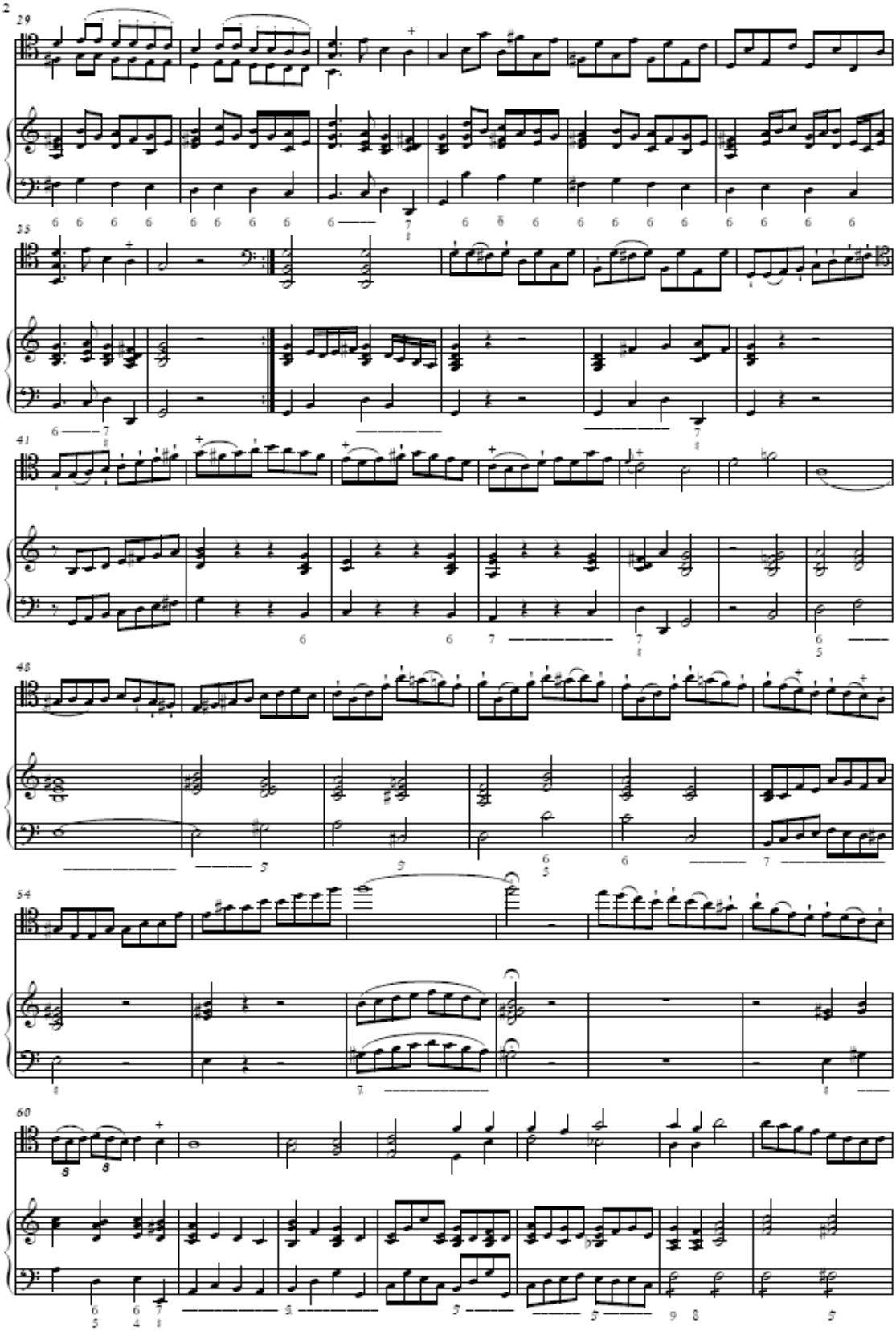


One cannot underestimate the effect that the musical personalities and atmosphere in Paris would have had on the young student from Malta. Prior to the establishment of the *Conservatoire* system, and the ensuing standardisation of music education during the French Revolution and the Consulate, education in music in France was generally undertaken in the various cathedral choir schools, or in the countless private schools that were active in the period. Before 1789, there were no less than five hundred such choir schools in France.[72] In Isouard's case, taking music as a supplementary subject possibly meant that he would be taught privately.

The decade before the Revolution was musically very active in the French capital. The year 1786 alone, (one that saw the premiere of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* in Vienna*)*, was one of the busiest in the Parisian operatic world. The works of Gluck reigned at the *Opéra (Académie Royale de Musique),* whilst André Grétry poured out a series of works that were performed in both Paris at the *Comédie-Italienne*, as well as at Fontainebleau. On 4 January, Sacchini's *Oepide à Colone* had its first performance in the court theatre at Versailles, and under the patronage of the Queen, Marie Antoinette, Salieri's opera *Tarare* received its premiere at the *Opéra*.

Composers such as Salieri, Gossec and Dalayrac had their operas staged in the city and even Isouard's later teacher, Pietro Guglielmi, had his operas *La bella Pescatrice, La Pastorella nobile* and *L'Inganno amoroso*, (the latter staged by Isouard at the Manoel Theatre in 1798), presented in that period. The instrumental series of Parisian music making, the *Concerts Spirituel,* presented a broad range of works, including those of Mozart and Haydn. French instrumentalists were famous throughout Europe and a wide repertoire of instrumental music was composed and published.

Importantly, in the decade of the 1780's, composition was in a period of transition and this was markedly evident in France. The newer orchestration of the period, and its emphasis on melody with supportive woodwind writing, especially in the works of the *opéra-comique* composers, Grétry and before him Philidor, were examples that the young Isouard emulated

[72] Jean Mongrédien, *French Music from the Enlightenment to Romanticism 1789-1830* (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1996), 11.

in his early compositions. The effect of the *opéra-comique* and Parisian theatre at the time, would have a profound influence on Nicolò, and forever direct him toward dedicating most of his career writing for the lyric stage.[73]

The young Isouard would have finished his studies at the *Pensionnat* prior to 1786, for there is one letter in the French National Archives from Grand Master de Rohan to his Ambassador in Paris, the *Bailli* Suffren, seeking support for the entry of both of Isouard's sons into the *Collège de Tournon*. As the third son, Julianus Emmanuel was not born until 1782, then this request from de Rohan would obviously have been in favour of both Nicolò and his elder brother Aloisius Ilarion Jacobus, who was born on 20 October 1771.[74]

The original text of de Rohan's letter to Suffren (where paragraph breaks have been added) reads:

> *Magister Hosp[ta]lis Hier[usa]lem*
> *St.[Sancti] Sepulc[hra], Princi[pes], & S' Anton[io], Viensia.*[75]
>
> *Vénérable très cher et bien aimé religieux, un bon sujet que vous connaissez peut-être, appelé Isouard Xuereb, d'une bon [bonne] famille maltaise attachée à notre service, a sept fils dont l'éducation lui tient à cœur, quoique de rêvers de fortune le mettent presque hors d'état d'y pourvoir convenablement, l'un d'eux est cependant entretenu au Collège de Tournon où l'on paraît également content de ses dispositions et de sa conduite; nous avons demandé précédemment au Maréchal Prince de Soubise en faveur des autres quelques-unes des 31 places gratuites que son titre de fondateur lui donne le droit de nommer dans ce collège, mais de nombreux engagements ayant enchainé sa bonne volonté, nous nous sommes bornés à désirer qu'il veuille bien dans la suite.*
>
> *Se souvenir de notre prière quand l'occasion deviendrait plus heureuse. Les petites Isouards sont si jeunes que pendant sept ans il s'en trouvera toujours quelqu'un qui pourra profiter de cette préférence; ainsi en cultivant les favorables dispositions du Prince, il vous sera facile d'en accélérer le bon effet, et vos soins à cet égard nous seront infiniment sensibles.*
>
> *Sur ce nous prions Dieu qu'il ait votre vénérable personne en sa sainte garde. Rohan.*

[73] David Charlton, *Grétry and the growth of Opéra-comique* (Cambridge: CUP, 1986).
[74] *Azzopardi,* 15.
[75] Literally translated - The Grand Master of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, of the Holy Sepulchre and of the Order of St Anthony of Vienne.

Appended to the top left hand of the letter is the following:

> *31 Juillet 1786.*
> *Recommandation en faveur des petits Isouards, maltais, pour le collège de Tournon à la nom du Prince de Soubise.*[76]

Both sons were admitted to the College of Tournon (formerly Tournon en Vivarais, today Tournon d'Ardéche, in the department of Ardéche). This was a military college founded by Cardinal Francois de Tournon (1489-1562). Previously this college had been a Jesuit school, but after the suppression of the Society of Jesus in France in 1763 it was governed by another religious order.[77] At the time of the request from Grand Master de Rohan, the college operated under the direction of the Oratorian Order, and had been placed under the authority of *marechal* Charles de Rohan, prince de Soubise (1717-1787). Two of the students, around the time of Isouard's study there were later distinguished soldiers under the Empire -Pierre Daru (1767-1829), who in 1811 was appointed Secretary of State, and Jean-Pierre Acheson (1766-1823), who was appointed Minister of the Interior in 1809.

Nicolò is mentioned as having been engaged as a midshipman in the Royal French Marine, but this is not confirmed.[78] In the 1868 Paris edition of *Le dictionnaire des musicians*, Isouard is said to have been in the navy before the Revolution, but as he joined the Tournon School in 1786 at the age of twelve or thirteen, he would only have been sixteen or seventeen at the time when he returned to Malta in 1789 or 1790.[79] This meant that he was possibly too young, or the Revolution occurred too early for him to have concluded his course at Tournon.

Providentially, two short works in manuscript and bearing the inscription that they were 'composed at the age of fourteen' have been found in a catalogue of a sale at the auction house *L'Autographe. S.A*. in Geneva. The text in this 2003 catalogue reads:

> *129. ISOUARD Niccolò (1775-1818) Compositeur maltais, il vint à Paris en 1799 où il resta jusqu'à sa mort. Auteur d'une cinquantaine d'opéras, de messes, de psaumes —*

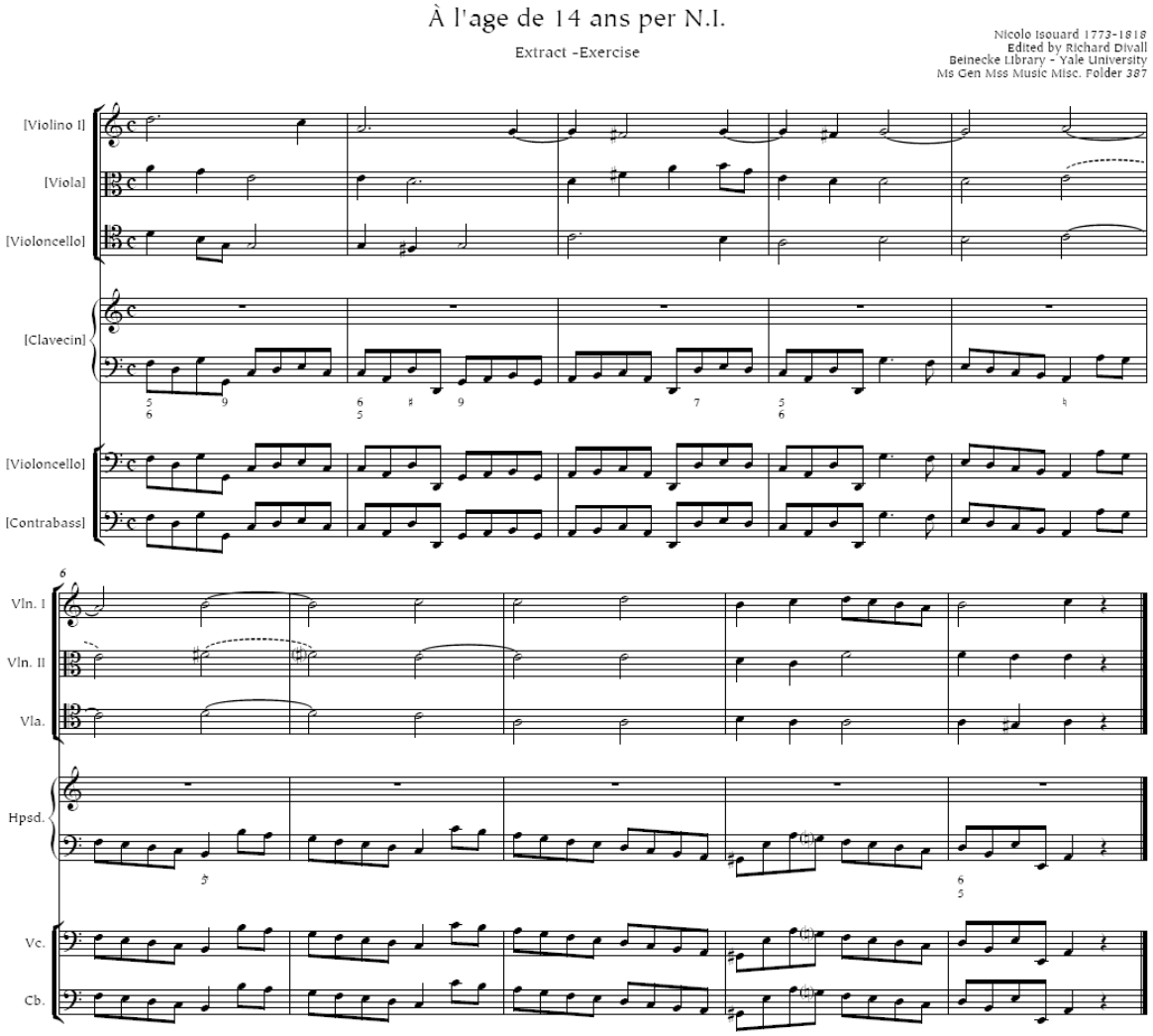
[76] FBN Paris. *Archives Nationales*, M. 962.
[77] John McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France* (London: SPCK, 1969), 516-7.
[78] *Encyclopaedia Americana*, vol. 9, 283.
[79] Alain Blondy to Dun Gwann Azzopardi. Letter 4 April 1991.

> *MUSIQUE A.S. «Nicolas», 2 pp.in-4 obl. ; (1789). Petit découpage restauré à un coin. (900.–)500.–*
> *Dix-sept longues lignes de musique composées (en partie) «... à l'âge de 14 ans par N. I.» (Note autographe en tête de la seconde page) sur les paroles «Ah non più mia speranza - ah non farmi morrir» ou «Le mie perdona follie gelose», ou encore «Io merito il tuo sdegno per eccesso d'amor».*
> *Intéressante et rare feuille de ce compositeur mort à l'âge de 43 ans.*

The manuscript, of one page, was purchased at the auction from catalogue No. 53 in November 2003, by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University. Currently it is in the music manuscript collection, held in Folder 387. Images are available on the Yale University Library site as Image ID Number 1309578.

Written in Isouard's hand on the recto and verso of the sheet, it is the only music that has come down to us from the composer's early student years in France. If Isouard took this one page of sketches to France with him on leaving Malta in 1800, then there is a good chance that he took other similar exercises or studies. This manuscript is more than interesting on several counts. On the top of the recto, Isouard has written in ink the following title description: *À l'âge de 14 ans par N.I.* This would place the date of composition in either 1786 or 1787, while the young Isouard was at Tournon.

The recto consists of ten bars of four part string score in old soprano clef, alto, tenor and bass clefs with some figured bass underneath the bass line. It is a typical exercise or a *disposizione* of the period, and one, not without its mistakes. But it is an interesting exercise of a brief orchestral passage in a ritornello form. That Isouard was writing in old clef notation, utilised in the 1750's by Rameau, and in the traditional Italian teaching methods of the day is fascinating, but also indicative that it may have simply been an exercise in writing in those clefs.

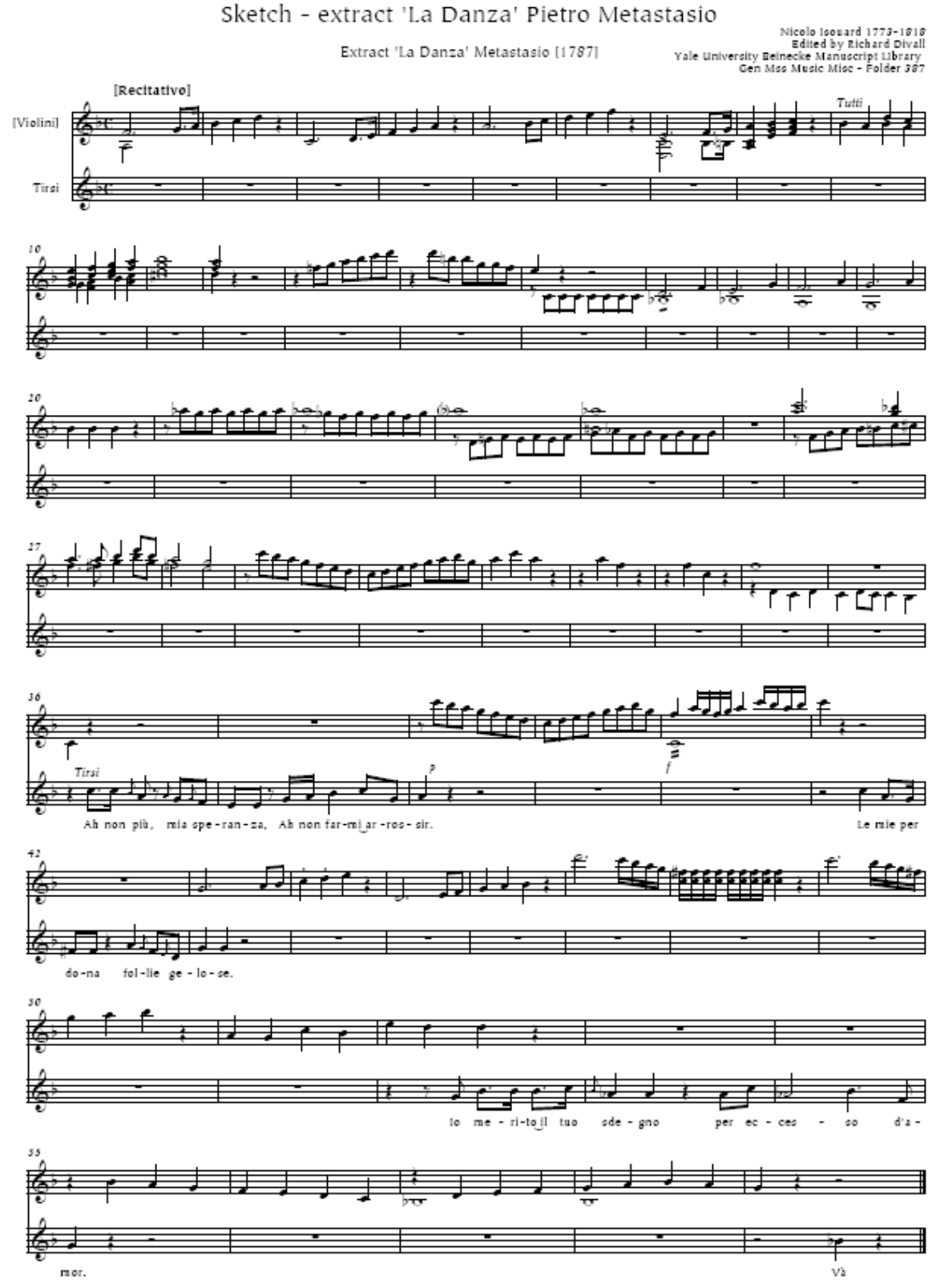


The verso of the manuscript is far more interesting, though a little more fragmentary. It is a string short score of a *recitativo accompagnato* of a scene taken from Pietro Metastasio's *Azione or Festa Teatrale, La Danza*. This work was written as a cantata for two characters, *Nice e Tirsi*, by Metastasio in 1744, and first set to music by the Viennese composer Giuseppe Bonno (1711-1788). Gluck wrote another version of the opera in 1755. The actual text in the sketch is taken from the final recitative in *La Danza,* sung by the character Tirsi, and reads:

> *Ah non più, mia speranza,*
> *Ah non farmi arrossir. Le mie perdona*
> *Follie gelose. Io merito il tuo sdegno*
> *Per eccesso d'amor. Và,...*[80]

[80] Abate Pietro Metastasio, *Tutte le Opere di Pietro Metastasio* ed. Bruno Brunelli (Milan: Mondadori, 1965), Vol. 2, 317.

The fragmentary state of the *recitativo* only tells us so much. But, enough remains to show that the fourteen year only student was familiar with and comfortable in writing in a dramatic vein for the voice. Even at this young age, it is obvious that he had a good technical and dramatic understanding, of the use of voice and orchestra in an operatic situation.


Sketch - extract 'La Danza' Pietro Metastasio
Extract 'La Danza' Metastasio [1787]
Nicolo Isouard 1773-1818
Edited by Richard Divall
Yale University Beinecke Manuscript Library
Gen Mss Music Misc - Folder 387
[Recitativo]
[Violini]
Tirsi
Tutti
Tirsi
Ah non più, mia spe-ran-za, Ah non far-mi_ar-ros-sir.
Le mie per
do-na fol-lie ge-lo-se.
lo me-ri-to_il tuo sde-gno per ec-ces-so d'a-
mor.
Và

The above two sketches may be the earliest music manuscripts that we have found from Isouard's hand. One can only hope that sheltered in the Archives of the Ministry of War in France, some papers relevant to Isouard's education at Tournon might appear, that would shed light on this period of his life.

The Revolution of 1789 brought Isouard's studies at Tournon to an end, and he was brought back to Malta.[81] It must have been immediately after his return from France that Isouard commenced, or recommenced studies with Dun Michel' Angelo Vella and/or Francesco Azopardi. It is possible that Isouard's first lessons from these two Maltese teachers might have taken place before his studies in Paris and Tournon. Comparing the above two sketches from 1787 and then his *Te Deum* of 1791, one is aware of the huge development in Isouard's craft, that had taken place over these four years.

That the world had changed was forcefully demonstrated, when on 13 July 1790, the musical *Melodrame*, entitled, *La Prise de la Bastille*, was presented in an imaginative new and spectacular secular theatre, but one in a familiar setting – in the *Cathédrale Notre Dame de Paris.*[82] Being in France at the time, the young Isouard had been witness to one of the most pivotal moments in history.

[81] Marie Briquet/David Charlton, 'Isouard, Nicolas', *The New Grove,* etc.
[82] Norman Demuth, *French Opera – Its Development to the French Revolution* (Sussex: The Artemis Press, 1963), 249

5.

His Teachers on Malta – Michel' Angelo Vella and Francesco Azopardi, and the Maltese Context.

Michel' Angelo (Mikiel Ang) Vella was born on Malta in 1710 and died there in 1792. Born in Senglea, one of the two cities that survived the Great Siege of Malta by the Ottoman Turks in 1565, Vella possibly came from a wealthy family with maritime interests. Presumably, as a younger son he was intended for the Church, and at the age of eleven years of age was already referred to as a *Chierico* (cleric). Vella was tonsured on 22 December 1725.[83]

On 14 July 1730 Vella left Malta for Naples and enrolled on 4 September in the same year to study music at the *Conservatorio Santa Maria della Pietà dei Turchini*, commencing with the *primo maestro* of that school, Nicola Fago, and his assistant Andrea Basso. (Vella's pupil Isouard was to study at the same Neapolitan *Conservatorio*). Vella later studied with the opera composer Leonardo Leo (1694–1744). His Maltese colleagues in Naples around this period included the successful opera composers Girolamo Abos (1715–60), and Giuseppe Arena (1707–84), as well as the Maltese based Benigno Zerafa (1726–1804).[84] Ordained a priest in the parish of the Province of Acerra in Naples on 18 December 1733, Vella returned to Malta at the beginning of 1738, serving as a priest in the parish of Senglea. In 1740, and

[83] Richard Divall, Preface to Michel Angelo Vella, *24 Sonatas for Three Flutes* (Melbourne: Lyrebird Press, 2009), Vol. 1.

[84] Girolamo Abos (1715-1760) was a distinguished Maltese born composer, descended from a French immigrant family from Castellane. Girolamo studied in Naples from 1729 at the Conservatorio di Sant' Onofrio and later was a well-known teacher, and assistant to Ferdinando Feo at the Conservatorio dei Poveri di Gesù Cristo. From 1754 until 1759 Abos was the *secondo maestro* at the Conservatorio della Pietà dei Turchini. He died in Naples having written sixteen operas and a considerable amount of sacred music. The manuscripts of Abos' operas and sacred music show a composer of the highest imagination and expertise in both areas. His operas are written with a great theatrical style and the vocal writing is for the finest of virtuoso voices. His sacred music, ranging from Masses to Vespers is extremely well written for soloists, choir and orchestra, and the style of his music is securely grounded in the meaning of the liturgical texts. It is not recorded that Abos ever returned to his birthplace Malta, but both of his children were placed there as wards. Abos was deeply religious, and his son Gaetano, born in 1754 became a Conventual Chaplain of the Order of Malta in the *Langue* of Italy, but died very young. His daughter Maria Josepha entered the Benedictine monastery in Malta and died in 1793. Joseph Vella Bondin, 'Giuseppe Arena 1707-1784', in *Melitensium Amor - A Festscrift for Dun Gwann Azzopardi.* Edited by Toni Cortis and Thomas Freller, etc. (Malta: n.p., 2002). The author also clearly proves that the date of Giuseppe Arena's birth is 7 December 1707, and not in 1709 as cited in *The New Grove*. Gordana Lazarevich, 'Arena, Giuseppe', *The New Grove.*

on obtaining the necessary licence from the Bishop, he commenced teaching grammar, rhetoric, philosophy and humanistic studies, which included music. Most of Vella's career was spent at the Collegiate Church at Cospicua (Bormla).

Malta had been ruled by the Order of Malta or the Knights of St John from 1530. Then, as now, the two main islands [and Comino] were intensely religious in character, and the cathedral in Mdina, the Conventual Church of St John and parishes on both Malta and Gozo encouraged a significant musical presence in the liturgy. Vella returned to this milieu and worked as a *maestro di capella* and priest on the island.

His return unfortunately coincided with a decree by the then Bishop of Malta, Frà Paul Alpheran de Bussan (1684-1757), that music employed in the liturgy was deliberately to be kept simple and short, with the effect that Vella's obvious talents as a composer of sacred music were curtailed or restrained. Appointed Bishop of Malta in 1728 and titular Archbishop of Tamiathis in 1746, Alpheran, a Conventual Chaplain of the Order of Malta, was not at all an artistic philistine, but rather a bishop who tried to bring the music to the service of the Liturgy. He excelled in and was a devotee of Gregorian music.[85] Accordingly, Vella's own music talents remain fully revealed only through his secular instrumental music. A comparison between Vella's surviving small sacred works with those of his Maltese contemporary, Girolamo Abos is invidious. Abos, as can be seen from his Mass in G major, and his *Missa à Due Cori*, for two choirs and two orchestras, is a secure professional composer, and like Jommelli and Guglielmi, was allowed to compose in a broad and majestic musical style, often utilising generous forces.[86]

Vella's musical reputation rests almost solely on the publication in Paris in 1768 of a set of parts (but no score) of a superlative set of *Sei Sonate a Tre Violini col Basso*. They were dedicated to a Knight of Malta (and obvious patron), the *Bailli* Frà Adrien de La Vieuville d'Orville de Wignacourt (1681-1774), the Prior of Champagne.[87] An accomplished writer and patron of the arts, Frà Adrien was the grandnephew of one Grand Master, Adrien de

[85] Carmel Testa, *The Life and Times of Grand Master Pinto 1741-1773* (Valletta: Midsea Books, 1989), 211.
[86] Both works by Abos are in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, F-Pn. See Chapter One.
[87] Frà Adrien entered the Order, presumably as a page on 18 July 1692, at the age of eleven. (St. Allais, 96).

Wignacourt (1612-1697), and a descendant of another, the more famous Alof de Wignacourt (1547-1622), himself immortalised in his armour by another knight painter, Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio.[88]

These six string works are a model of *galante* composition, each in four movements and in a style that is a mixture of the South German Enlightenment, combined with French elements reminiscent of the works of Rameau, as well as the Italianate influences of his teachers. They are modern for their time and of exquisite architecture and construction.[89]

[88] The portrait by Caravaggio, executed in 1607-1608, of the Grand Master de Wignacourt and his page is now in the Louvre.
[89] Michel' Angelo Vella, *Sei Sonate per Tre Violini e Basso*. ed. Divall, unpublished.

Sei Sonate a Tre Violini col Basso

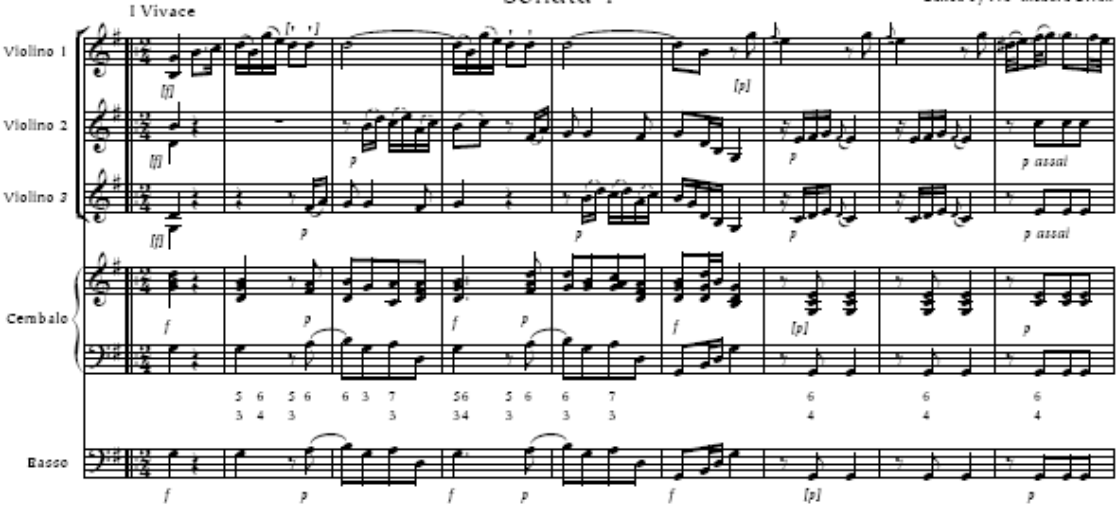
Dedicate All' Illust. Signore, Il Bailo di Wignacourt:
[Frà Adrien Vieuville d'Orville de Wignacourt c 1681–1774]
Grand Priore di Scampagna, L'Ordine di Malta

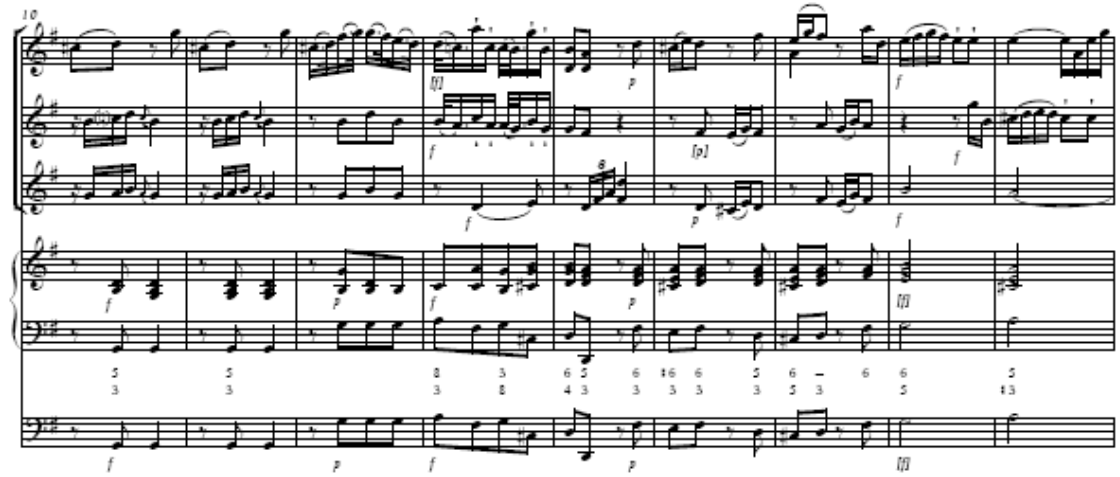
Sonata 1

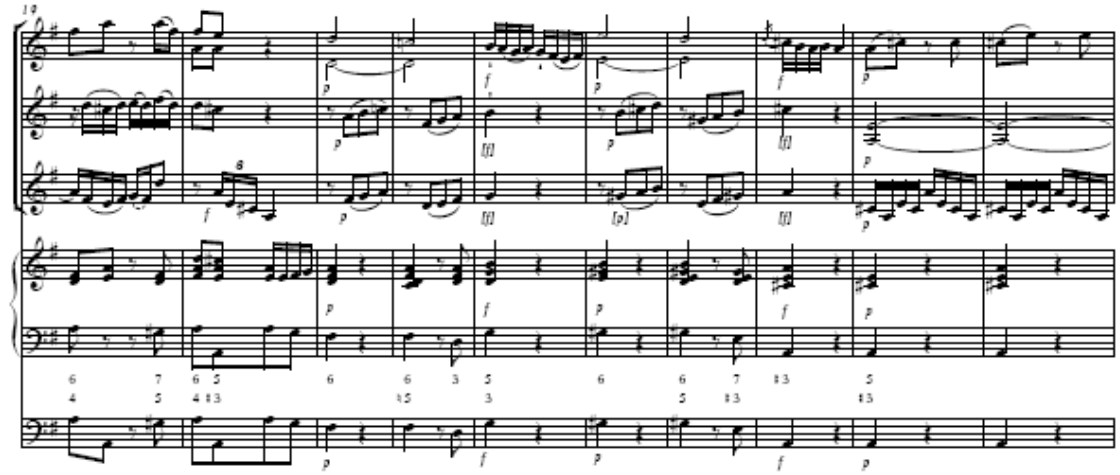
Michel'Angelo Vella [1710–1792 Malta]
Edited by Fra' Richard Divall

I Vivace

Violino 1
Violino 2
Violino 3
Cembalo
Basso







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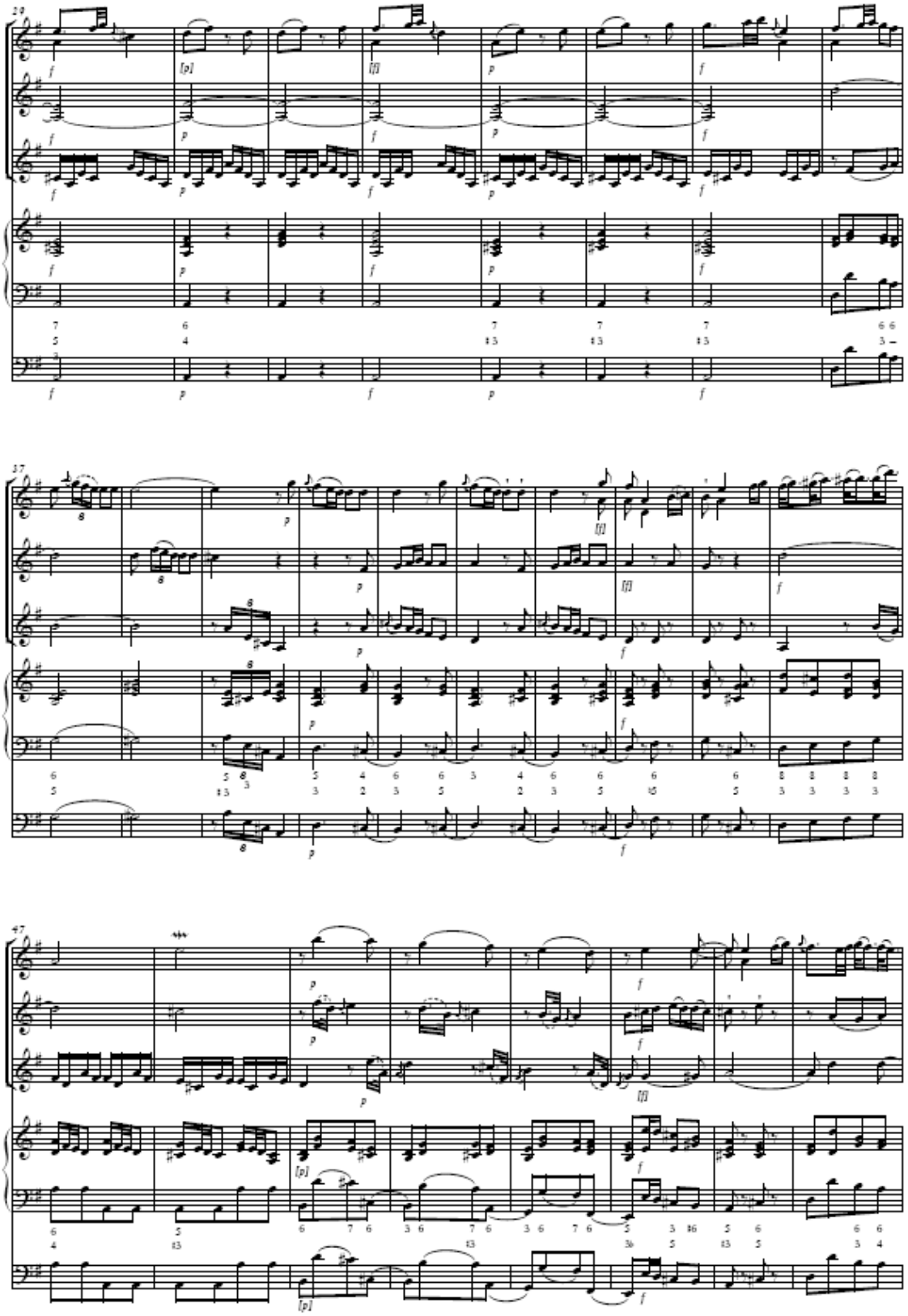
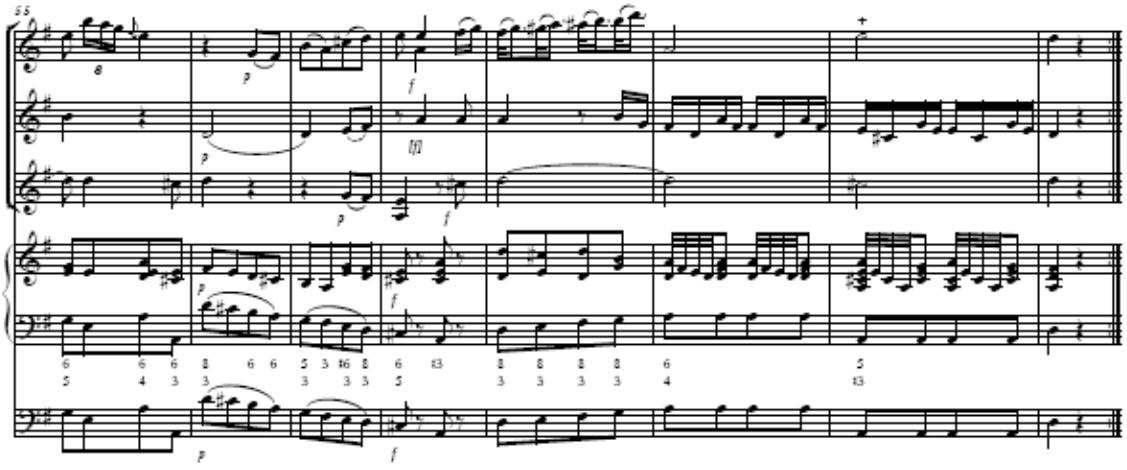
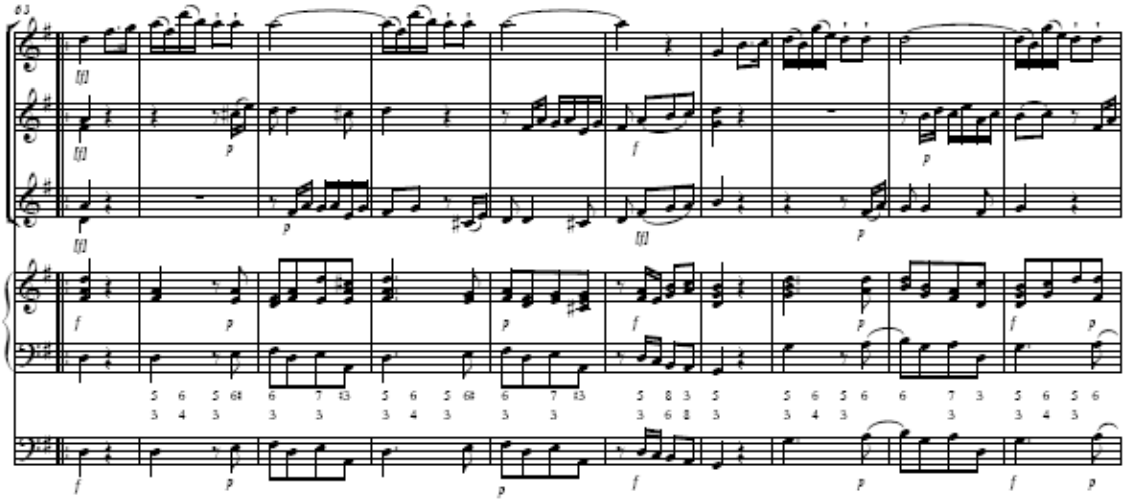
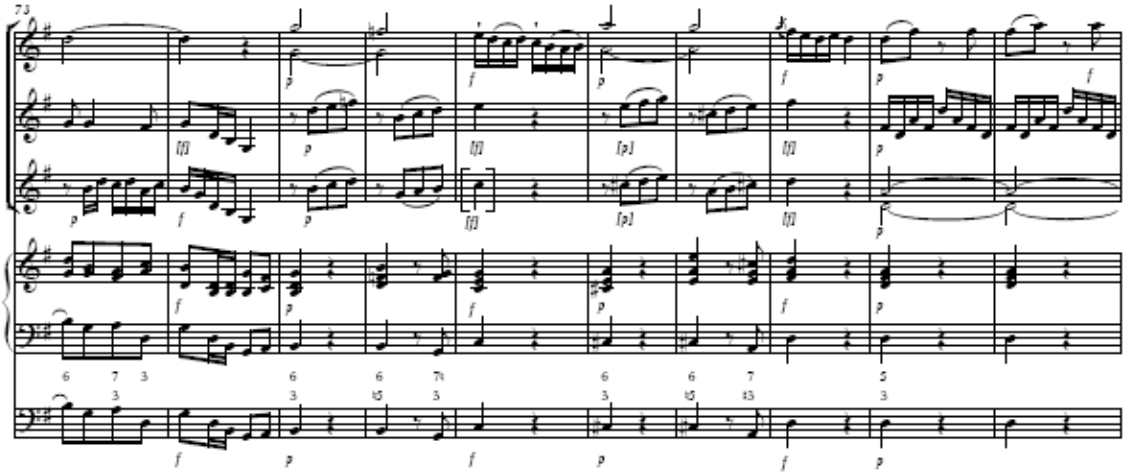








Apart from these six major string sonatas by Vella, we only have the recently located twenty-four Sonatas for three flutes, as well a few minor choral liturgical works composed on Malta. The twenty-four Sonatas for three solo *traverso* flutes were brought to my attention by the eminent Zelenka scholar, Dr Jan Stockigt. Through the kindness of Dr Karl Geck of the Sächsische Landesbibliothek in Dresden, she arranged for copies of the parts for each flute line to be made available to me. I suspect that the works were sent to Dresden to her brother, the flute playing Prince Karl of Saxony (1733-1796), by Maria-Amalia, Queen of Naples (1724-1760).[90]

In editing these works, it became immediately apparent that they were superior to similar works in this vein by Boismortier and others, and as such are a valuable addition to the repertoire for flute ensemble. Generally each work is in three or four contrasting movements, and each individual flute line is given an equal priority throughout the composition itself - an unusual feat when viewing other works in this genre.[91] These flute sonatas contain outstanding examples of double fugues that appear in the Cospicua Mass, and show that Vella kept abreast with musical developments of his era. However because of Bishop Alpheran's restrictive edict, all of his surviving sacred music is bland, and stripped of any arresting musical detail - relying solely on the effect of the liturgical texts, and set to music that can only be described as austere.

[90] Sir Harold Acton, *The Bourbons of Naples 1734-1825* (London: Methuen, 1963).
[91] Michel' Angelo Vella, *24 Sonatas for Three Traverso Flutes,* ed. Richard Divall (Melbourne: Lyrebird Press, 2009-2013), vols. 1-4.

Vella: Sonata 23.

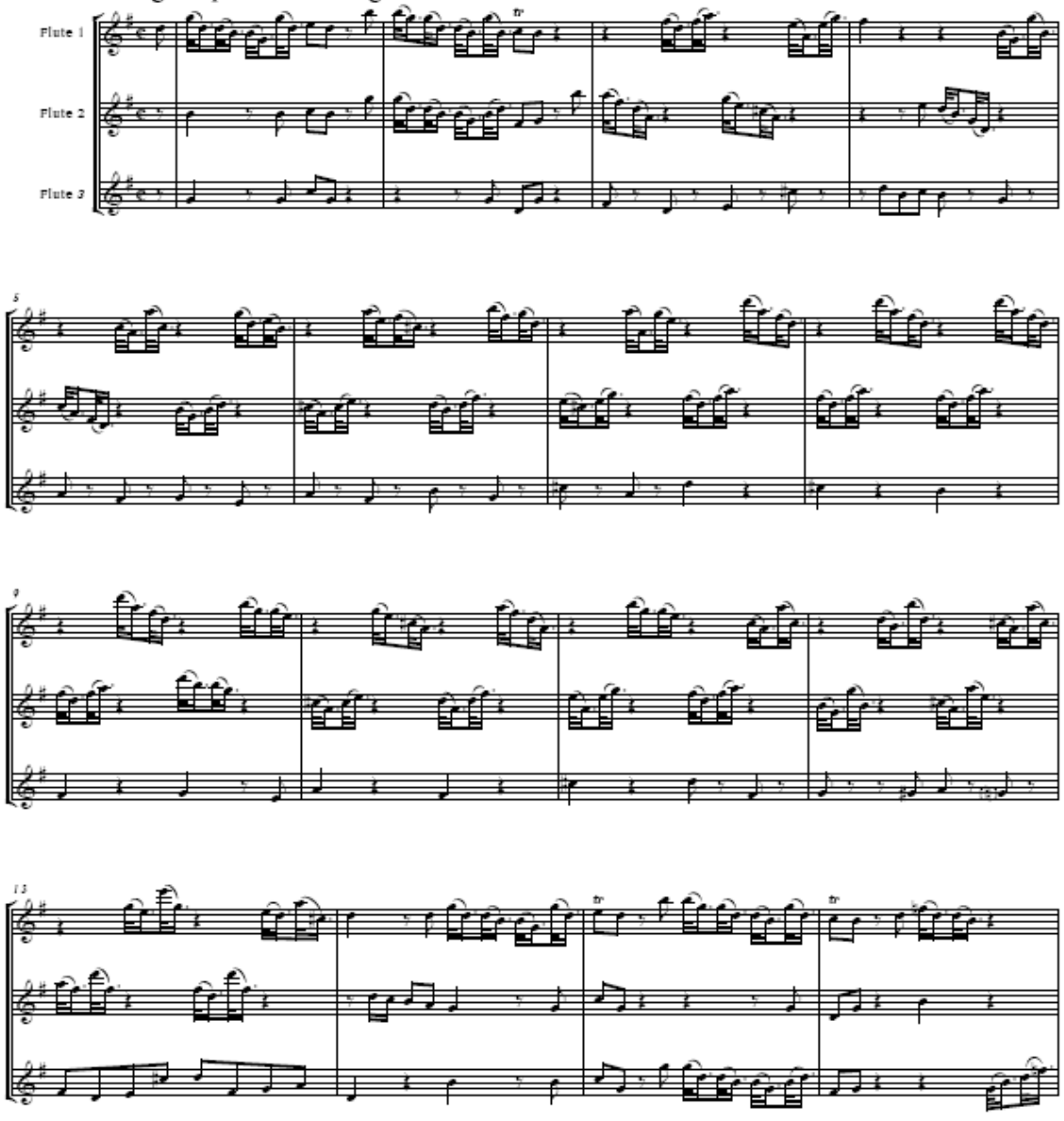
Sonata 23

Per la Notte di Natale - For Christmas Eve

Michel'Angelo Vella (1710-1792)
Edited by Richard Divall

I

Legato più tosto Allegro



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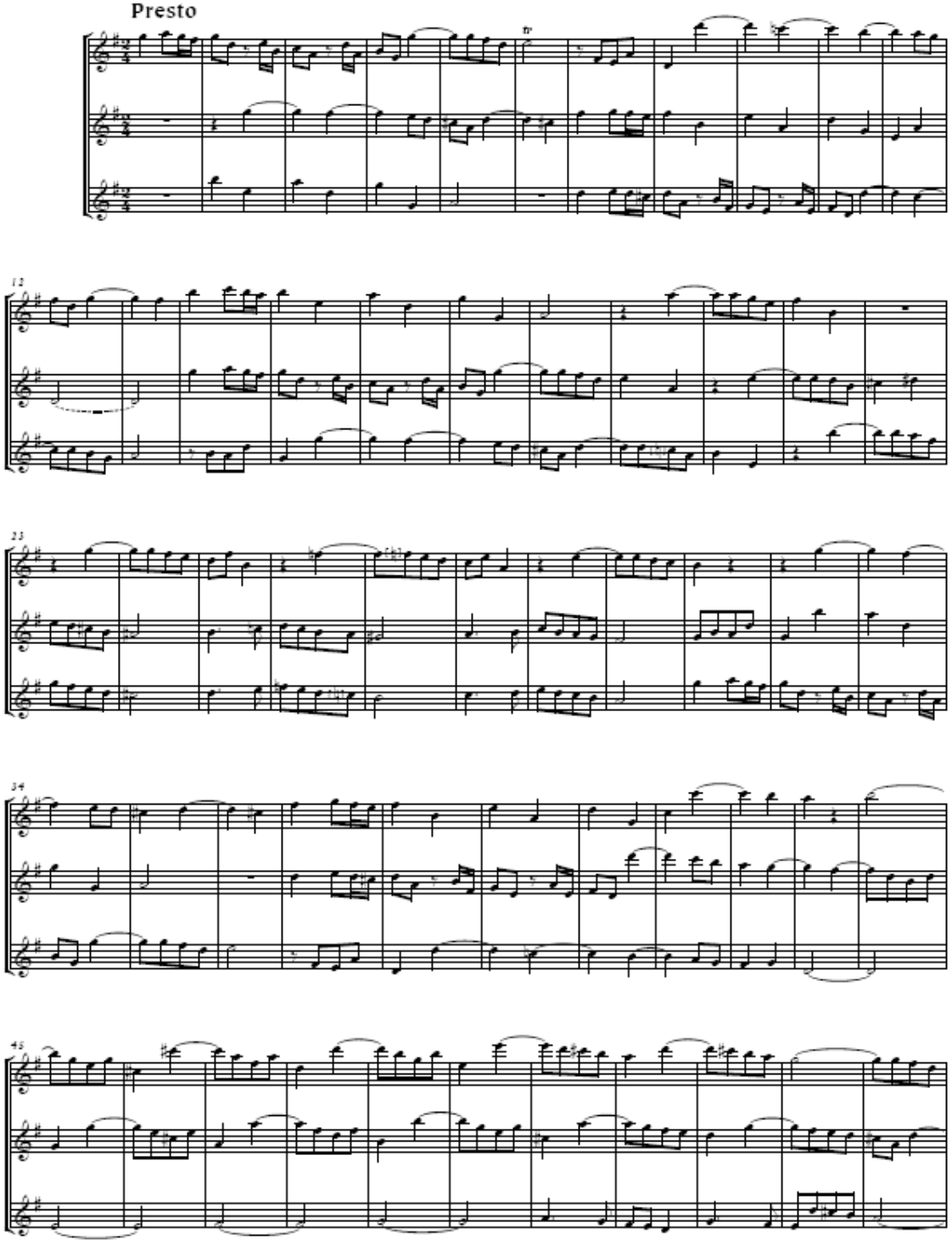
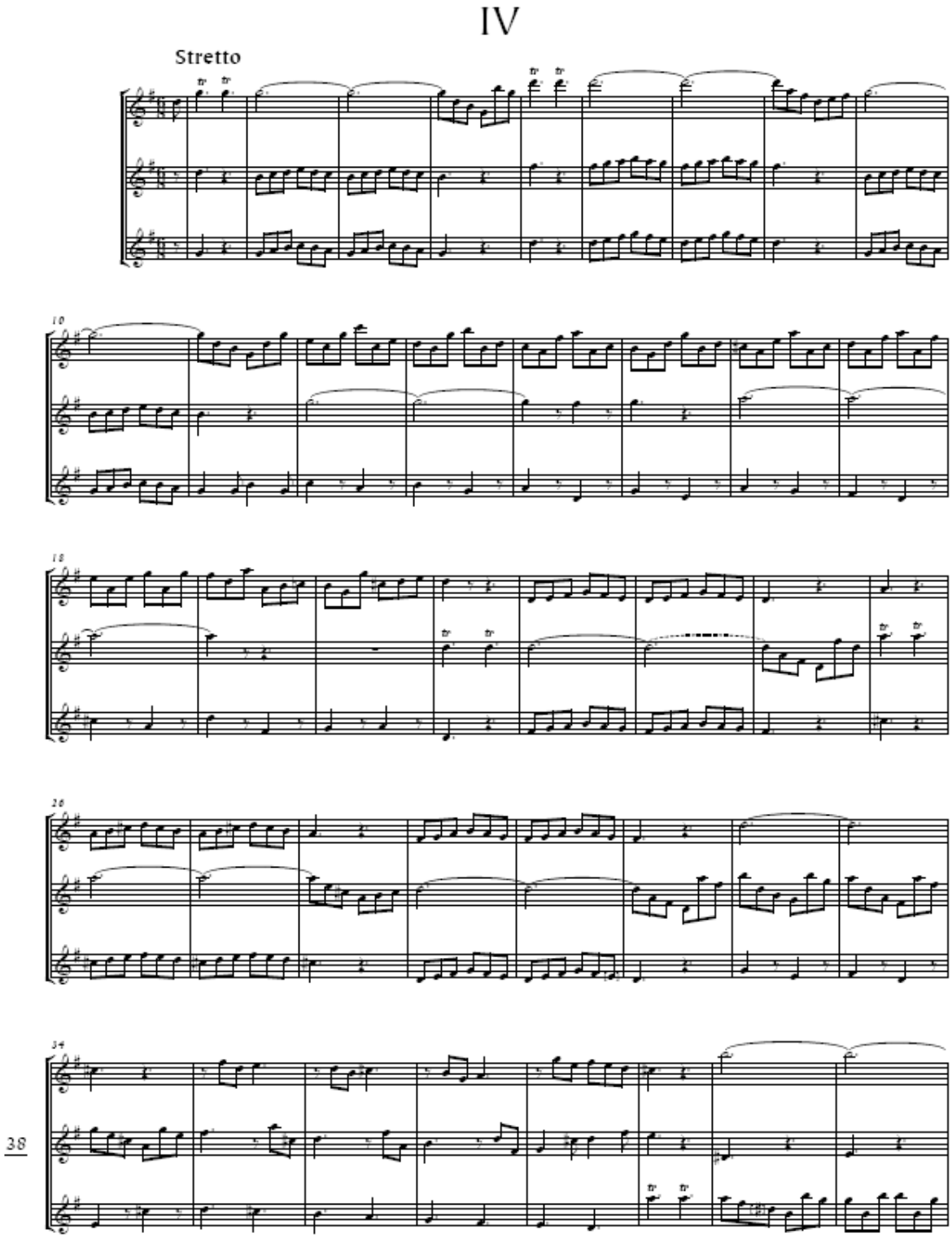
Sonata 22.

III

Presto



Sonata 23.



Judging from the musical quality of the *Sei Sonate* and the Twenty-Four Sonatas for Three Traverso Flutes, the apparent loss of so many of Vella's other manuscripts is a tragic loss for Maltese musical heritage. One can only hope that some of this composer's works will emerge from one of the religious or family archives on the Islands. It is clear from the quality of his instrumental compositions, that Vella's influence on the young Isouard would have been a striking and enriching one.

Aspects of Vella's career on Malta, primarily at the Collegiate Church of Cospicua from 1762, have been well researched by both Joseph Vella Bondin, Dr Simon Mercieca[92] of the University of Malta, and Dun Gwann Azzopardi.[93] Of particular loss are Vella's eight cantatas, some composed to texts by Grand Master Emmanuel de Rohan, and the four large Cantatas composed for the annual *Calendimaggio* (May Day) Feast, which were performed toward sunset in the Palace Square in Valletta.[94] Another cantata, *La Virtù Trionfante*, had been commissioned from Vella by the Inquisitor of Malta to commemorate the election of Pope Clement XIII (Rezzonico), in 1758.[95] The Italian composers Giovanni Battista Lampugnani (1706-d. after 1786), and Matteo Capranica (1708-d. after 1776), amongst others were commissioned by the Order to compose cantatas for this feast day. The printed libretti of Vella's Cantatas survive in the National Library of Malta, still housed in the Knights' elegant Library, completed in 1796.

Vella's main contribution must be in his teaching of the next generation of composers on Malta - Francesco Azopardi, Salvatore Magrin and Nicolò Isouard.[96] Vella died at the advanced ago of eighty-two, having made a significant, though underestimated contribution to music on Malta, both in the liturgy and in secular music.

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[92] Simon Mercieca, 'Eighteenth-Century Maltese Music and its Political Configurations', Szeged, Hungary: *MediterránánTanulmanyok*, XVII, (2008): 126-152.

[93] John Azzopardi and Matteo Sansone, *Italian and Maltese Music in the Archives of the Cathedral Museum of Malta* (Minn. USA: Hill Monastic Manuscript Library, St John's University, in collaboration with the Mdina, Malta, Cathedral Museum, 2001).

[94] Joseph Vella Bondin, 'Frà Filippo Pizzuto and Don Michael'Angelo Vella – Maltese Composers of Calendimaggio Cantatas', Valletta: *The Sunday Times*, 1994.

[95] Franco Bruni, *Musica sacra a Malta: le capelle della Cattedrale di S. Paolo e della Concattedrale di S. Giovanni Battista nel 19 secolo* (Marsa, Malta: PEG Pub. 1993).

[96] Franco Bruni, *Musica e Musicisti alla Cattedrale di Malta* (Msida, Malta: Malta UP, 2001).

Isouard's other teacher on Malta, Francesco Azopardi, had a long and distinguished career in sacred music. Giovanni Batista Agostino Francesco Giuseppe Azopardi was born in Rabat on 5 May 1748, known then as a suburb of (Citta) Notabile, or Mdina. He was baptised in the parish church of St Paul outside the Walls, which is today the Collegiate Church of St Paul. Built over the grotto, where St Paul was allegedly imprisoned by the Roman authorities, it is unusually a double church, with a smaller separate chapel over the actual entrance to the grotto on the right, for the use of the Knights of Malta, and a larger church to the left, for the parish of Rabat. Opposite the double church, Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt (1547-1622), built a college for the use of the chaplains of the Order. It is linked via tunnels to the grotto and is now the Wignacourt Museum.[97] Living very close to the church, Azopardi served as an altar boy at St Paul's Grotto from 1763 to 1767.[98]

On 15 October 1763 Azopardi was admitted as a full fee paying student to study music at the *Conservatorio di S. Onofrio a Capuana* in Naples. He graduated in 1767. During the time he studied under Carlo Cotumacci (1698-1782), and the Bavarian born organist, Joseph (Giuseppe) Doll, who died in Naples in 1774, names confirmed in the conservatory records reproduced by Salvatore Di Giacomo.[99] Both Cotumacci and Doll had succeeded Francesco Durante at the school. Visiting Naples in 1770, Mozart wrote in his Salzburg dialect to his sister Nannerl on 5 June, saying that, 'We gorged ourselves today with Herr Doll. He is a German composer and a fine fellow'.[100] After graduating Azopardi remained in Naples for a further seven years, involved in composition and possibly teaching.

According to a report from the cathedral music deputies to Archbishop Pellerano, Azopardi occasionally visited Malta at this time and had become: 'a fine *maestro di cappella* and an excellent contrapuntist. He also performs on the organ with total perfection, and, moreover, we can assure you not only of the reputation that he enjoys, but also of the experience that

[97] John (Dun Gwann) Azzopardi, and Thomas Freller, *Pauline Malta – The Formation of a Nation's Identity* (Rabat, Malta: Fondazzjioni Patri Martin Caruana, O.P. 2010). The Wignacourt Museum has recently undergone a major restoration and is now transformed into a major modern museum – one with important archival, artistic and musical holdings.
[98] John Azzopardi, *Notes Francesco Azopardi Exhibition* (Rabat, Malta: Wignacourt Museum, 2009).
[99] Salvatore Di Giacomo (1860-1934), poet and historian was the assistant librarian of the San Pietro a Maiella Conservatorium, and a colleague and collaborator of Benedetto Croce.
[100] Emily Anderson, *The Complete Letters of Mozart* (London: Macmillan, 1966), Vol. 1. Letter 96a, 142.

we had of him on more than one occasion, not only in this Cathedral Church, but also in other churches in your diocese, two years ago when he returned to this island'.[101]

Bishop Giovanni Pellerano (1702-1783), was born of a father from Nice, then briefly part of Savoy, and a Maltese mother. A priest of the Order of St John, he was appointed Bishop of Malta in 1770. Due to friction between himself and the Grand Master, Pellerano had to leave Malta in May 1775, being recalled by Pope Clement XIV to Rome to explain his actions. He was persuaded to renounce his See. In receipt of a generous annual pension of 7,000 *scudi* he was appointed Archbishop (titular) of the Greek island of Rhodes, which had previously belonged to the Order (1309-1523), and died in Rome in 1785. Inquisitor Antonio Lante (della Rovere) acted on his behalf during his enforced absence.[102] His successor, Vincenzo Labini (1735-1807), a Calabrian Priest of the Order, and a future supporter of Isouard, was appointed Bishop in 1780. He would be the last Bishop of Malta who was a cleric in the Order of Malta. In 1797 the See of Malta was raised to an Archbishopric and Labini and his successors also assumed the title of titular Archbishop of Rhodes.

Azopardi may have returned to Malta for a short period in 1771 or early 1772.[103] He made a dedication on his Mass in G, for the Commemoration of St Paul at the Cathedral in 1772, which was donated to the Chapter of the Cathedral Church.[104] On 18 December 1773, Azopardi applied for and was successful in obtaining the position of organist at the Mdina Cathedral: an appointment that was confirmed on 12 April 1774.[105] His duties consisted of playing the organ, in giving singing and music lessons to the singers in the cathedral school, and conducting the liturgical music in some services.

Another Maltese composer, Benigno Zerafa had been the long term *maestro di cappella* of the Mdina cathedral from 1744, and on his retirement, due to ill health on 8 December 1783, Azopardi assumed those responsibilities. The sacred works of Azopardi are

[101] CEM-AO, f. 620v and Buhagiar, *Azopardi,* 47.
[102] Frederick Ryan, *The House of the Temple – A Study of Malta and its Knights in the French Revolution* (London: Burns, Oats and Washbourne Ltd, 1930), 89.
[103] Dion Buhagiar, 'Francesco Azopardi: Maltese Theorist – New Evidence about his career and didactic writings', *Masters of Maltese Baroque Music*. ed. Dun Gwann Galea (Malta: APS Bank, 2002), 47.
[104] CEM-AO, folio 620v.
[105] John Azzopardi, *Azopardi Exhibition notes* (Rabat, Malta : Wignacourt Museum, possibly 2009.).

voluminous and well catalogued in the holdings of both the Mdina Cathedral Museum, [106] and also in the unpublished catalogue of the Wignacourt Museum in Rabat, Malta. After his death these scores were purchased from his descendants by the Cathedral Chapter for 1,000 *scudi*.[107] Azopardi was not a priest, but was very religious and remained unmarried.

The sacred music by Azopardi consists of no less than 36 Masses as well as hundreds of antiphons and an oratorio, *La Passione di Gesù Christo*, a setting of the libretto written in 1730 for Antonio Caldara in Vienna, by the Hapsburg poet-laureate Abate Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782).[108] The oratorio takes the dramatic form of a dialogue in two parts, between Mary Magdalene, St Peter, St John the Evangelist and Joseph of Arimathea, with arias and recitative from these characters, together with several choruses.[109]

Azopardi also composed several *Missa Pastorale* for the season of Christmas which are very beautiful, and some Masses for eight part voices and orchestra. In the former works, some of his musical influence is clearly evident in Isouard's vocal compositions. There are also a few secular works by Azopardi, namely a cantata, *La Magica Lanterna*, composed for the *Carnevale* in 1791, and several sinfonie and organ sonatas. The organ sonatas, like those of Luigi Grech, who followed in Azopardi's footsteps on Malta in the early nineteenth century, are written for a single manual or 'castrato' organ. Examples of these can be seen in many Maltese Churches, such as in the Oratory of St John in the Conventual Church, and the Oratory in the Collegiate Church at Cospicua, where Michel Angelo Vella was organist. (Both of these organs have been recently restored). It is worth giving some brief examples of his varied works below, to demonstrate the affinity between his style and some of the works of the young Isouard. The following extracts are from Azopardi's little secular cantata *La Magica Lanterna*, his organ sonatas, the *Missa Pastorale* in F major, and his *Magnificat*.[110] These manuscripts are all held in Maltese archives.[111]

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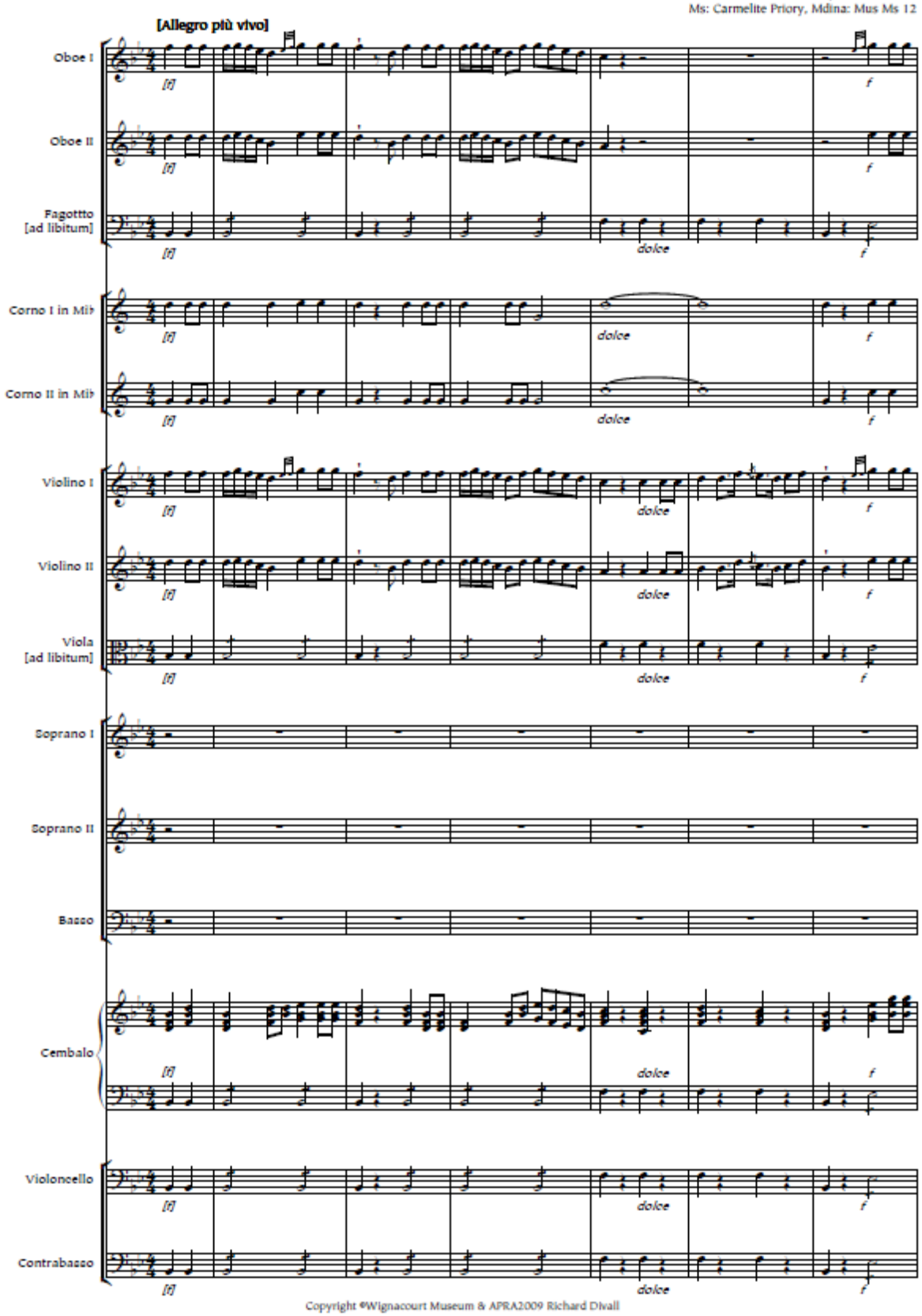
[106] Azzopardi & Sansone, *Mdina Museum Catalogue* (Mdina, Malta, Mdina Cathedral Museum, 2001).
[107] Mdina Cathedral. Chapter Meeting, April 1809. *Azopardi Exhibition Notes.*
[108] Brunelli, *Metastasio*, Vol.2, 551-563.
[109] This *azione teatrale sacre* was first set by Antonio Caldara in 1730. It was a popular text and was set, amongst others, by Jommelli, and also for Advent by Antonio Salieri in Vienna in 1777.
[110] The soprano part is missing from the *Missa Pastorale*.
[111] In Miceli, *Opera in Malta in the eighteenth century*, the 1791 performance of *La Magica Lanterna* is erroneously described as a 'comic opera'. Miceli 35. In fact it is only a short cantata.

La Magica Lanterna

Cantata per Carnovale del 1791 - Malta

Francesco Azopardi [1748-1808]
Edited by Richard Divall
Ms: Carmelite Priory, Mdina: Mus Ms 12



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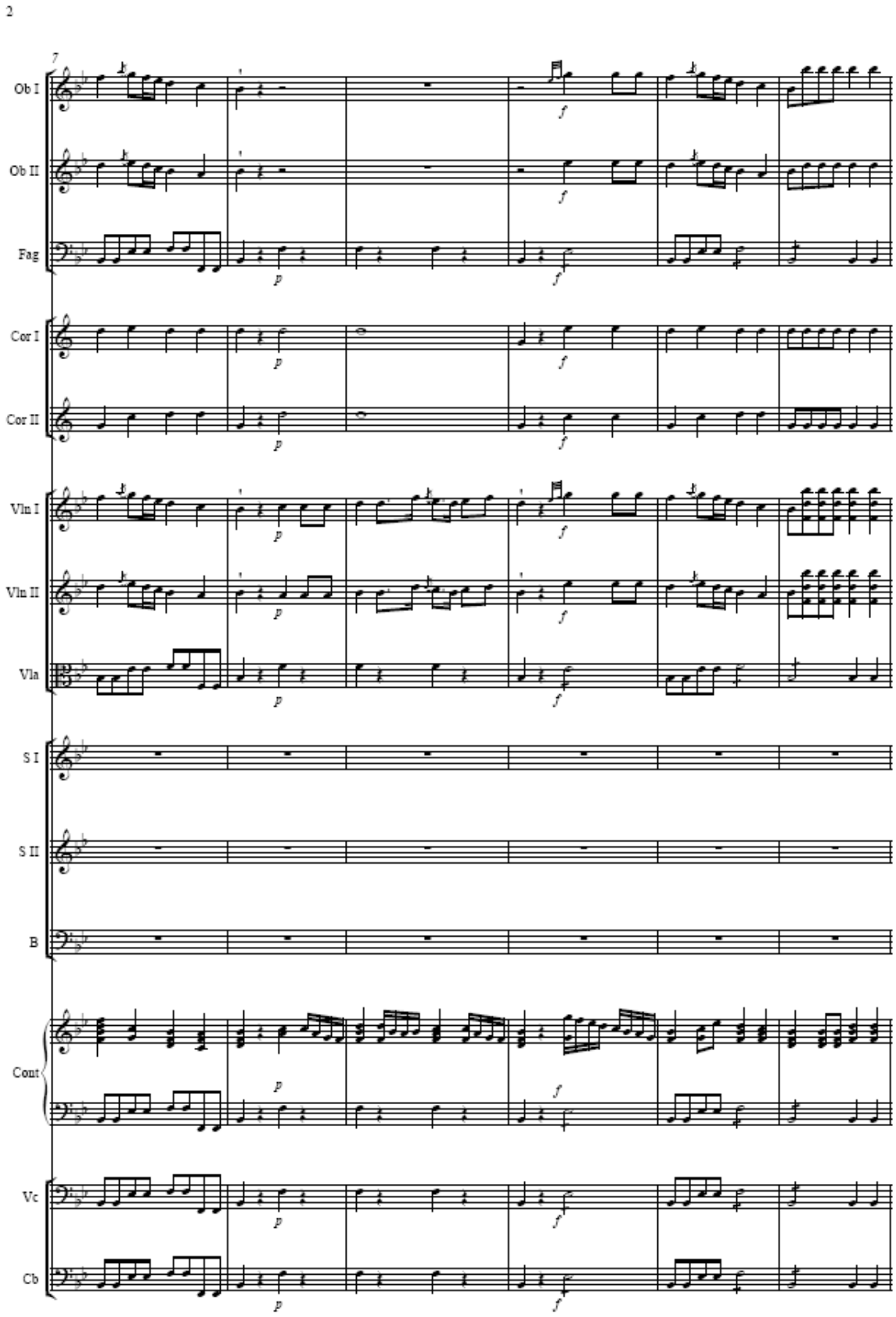
2
7
Ob I
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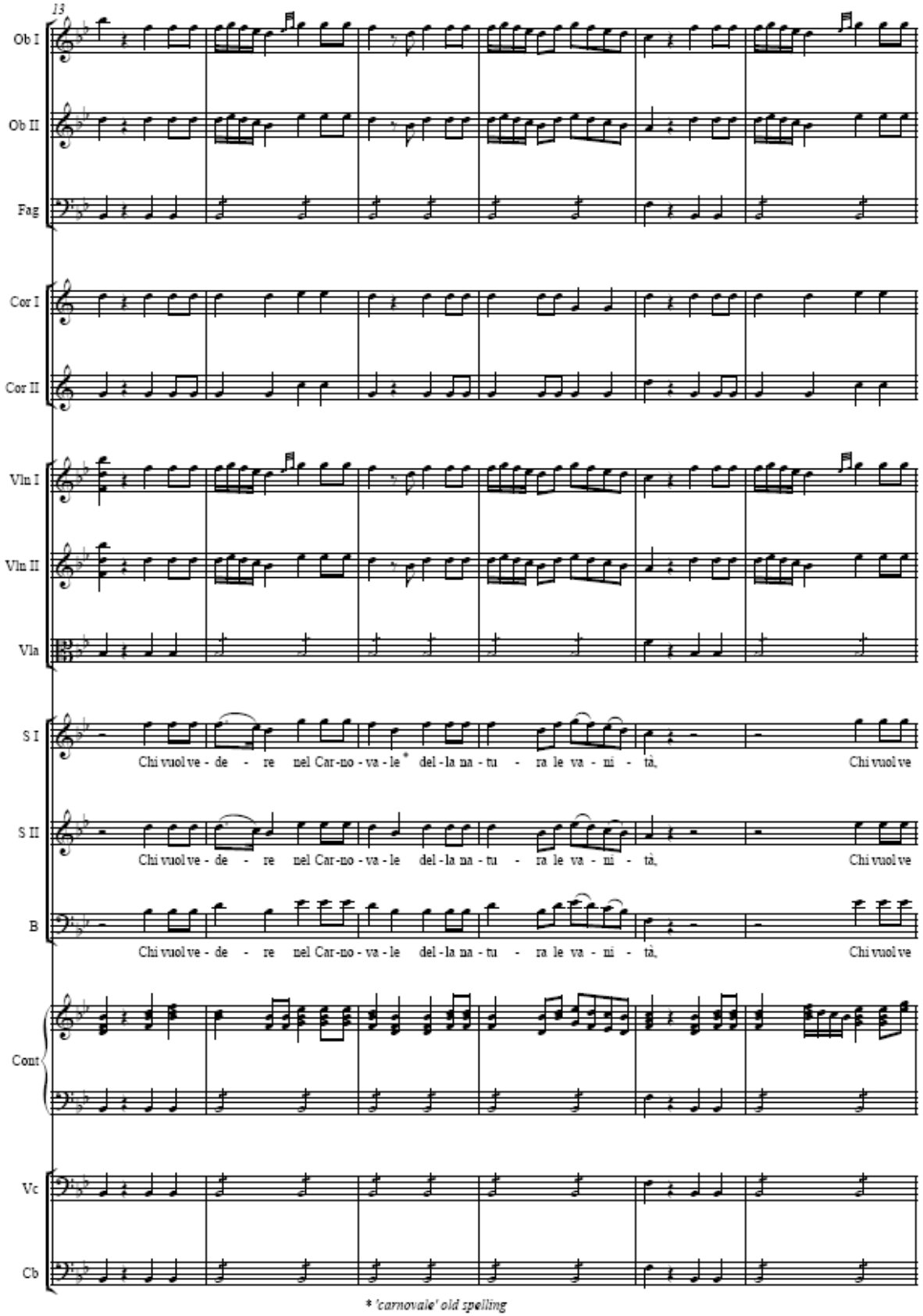


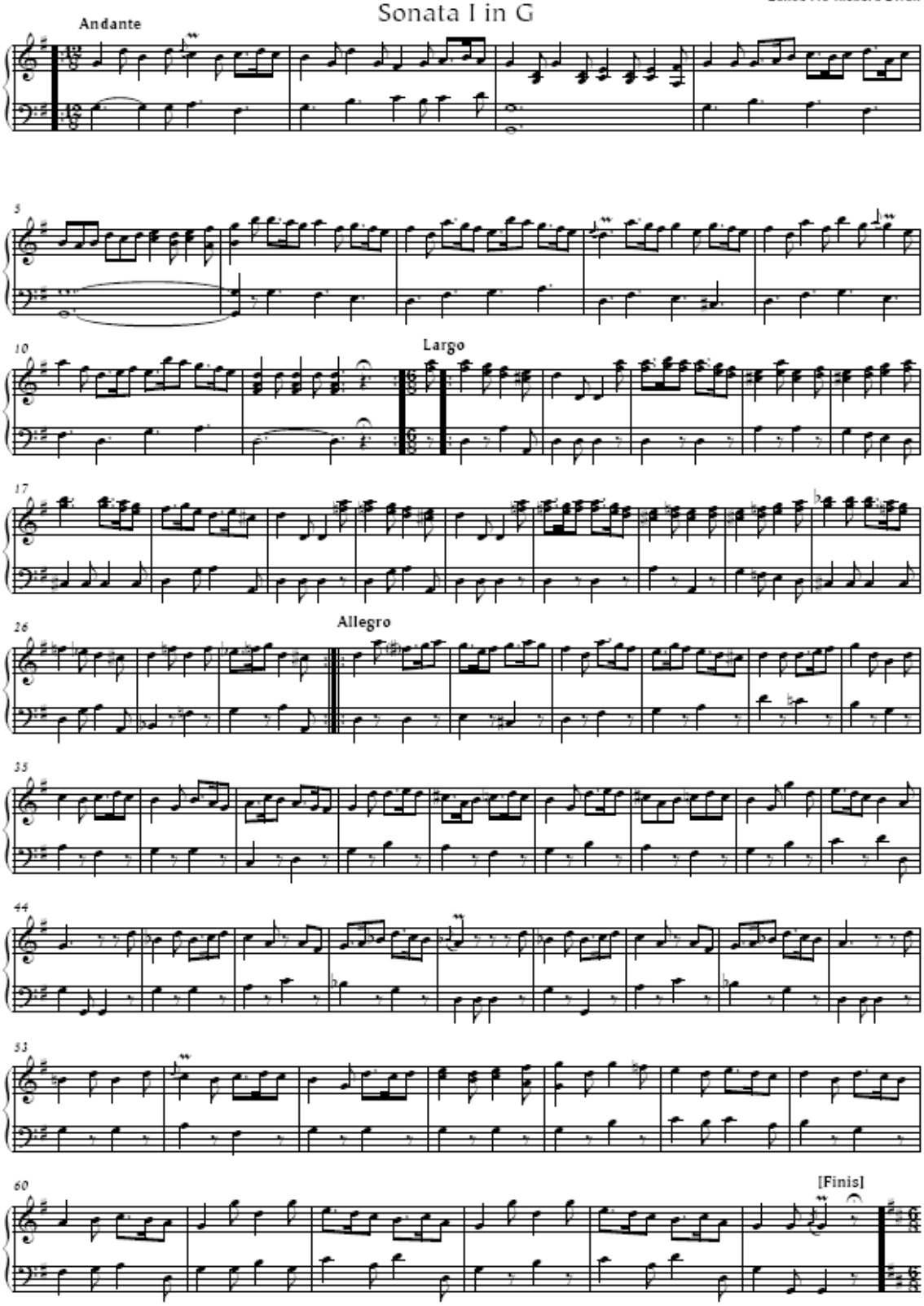
** 'carnovale' old spelling*

V Sonate Pastorale per Organo

Wignacourt Museum Manuscript - Rabat Malta.

Francesco Azopardi 1748-1809 Malta
Edited Frà Richard Divall

Sonata I in G



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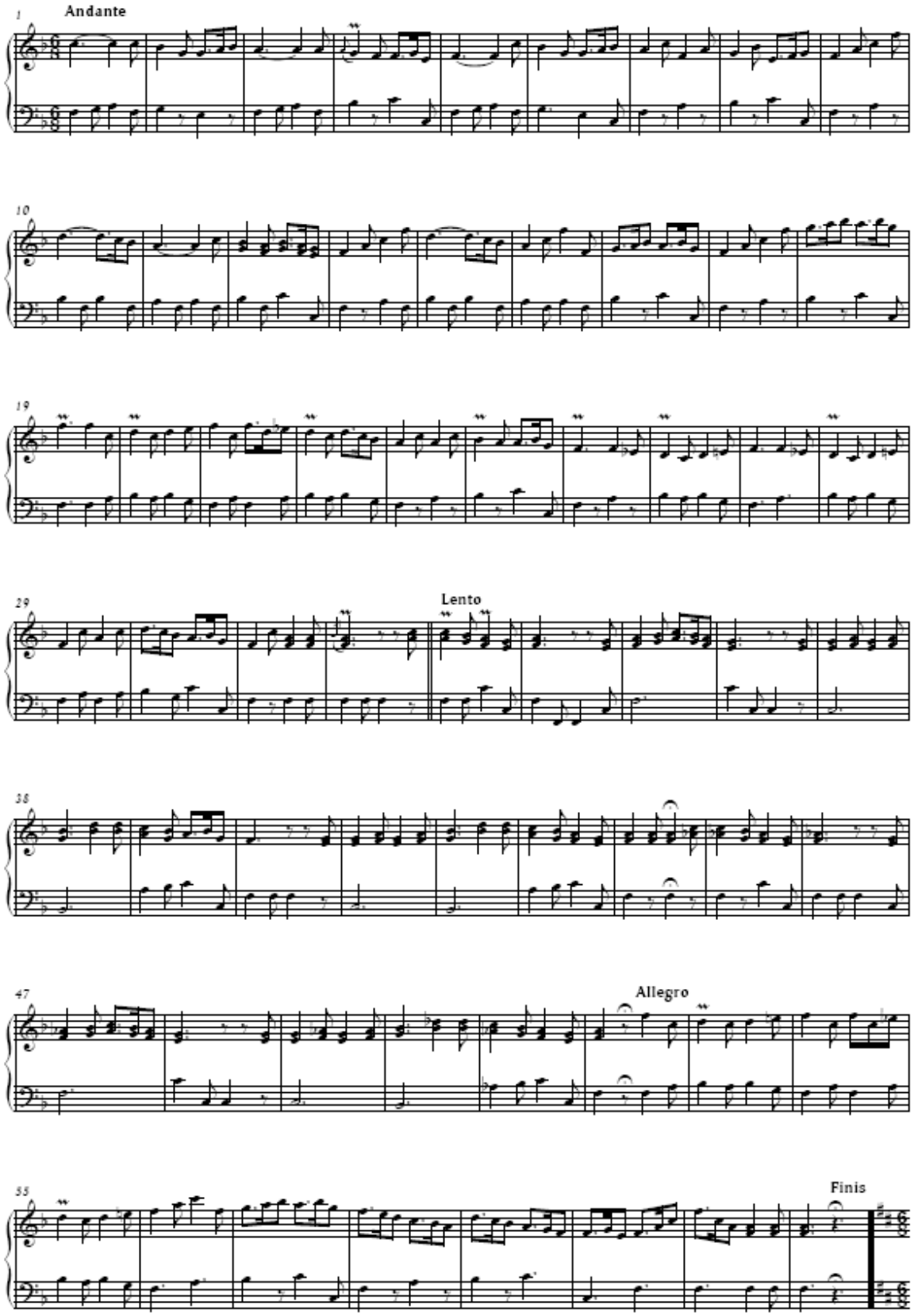
Sonata III in F

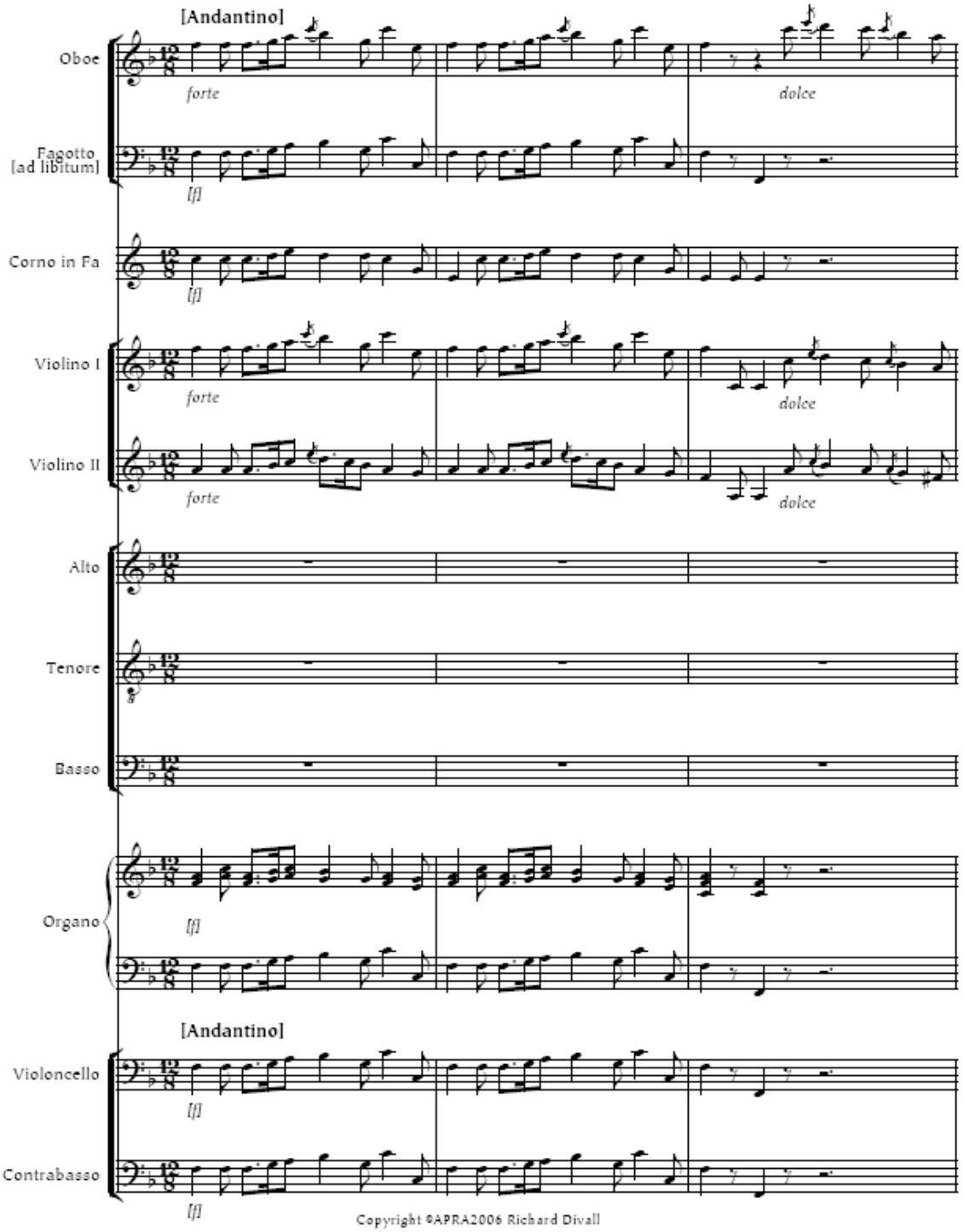


Missa Pastorale in Fa

Wignacourt Museum Manuscript 35/1: Rabat Malta.

Kyrie

Francesco Azopardi
Edited by Richard Divall



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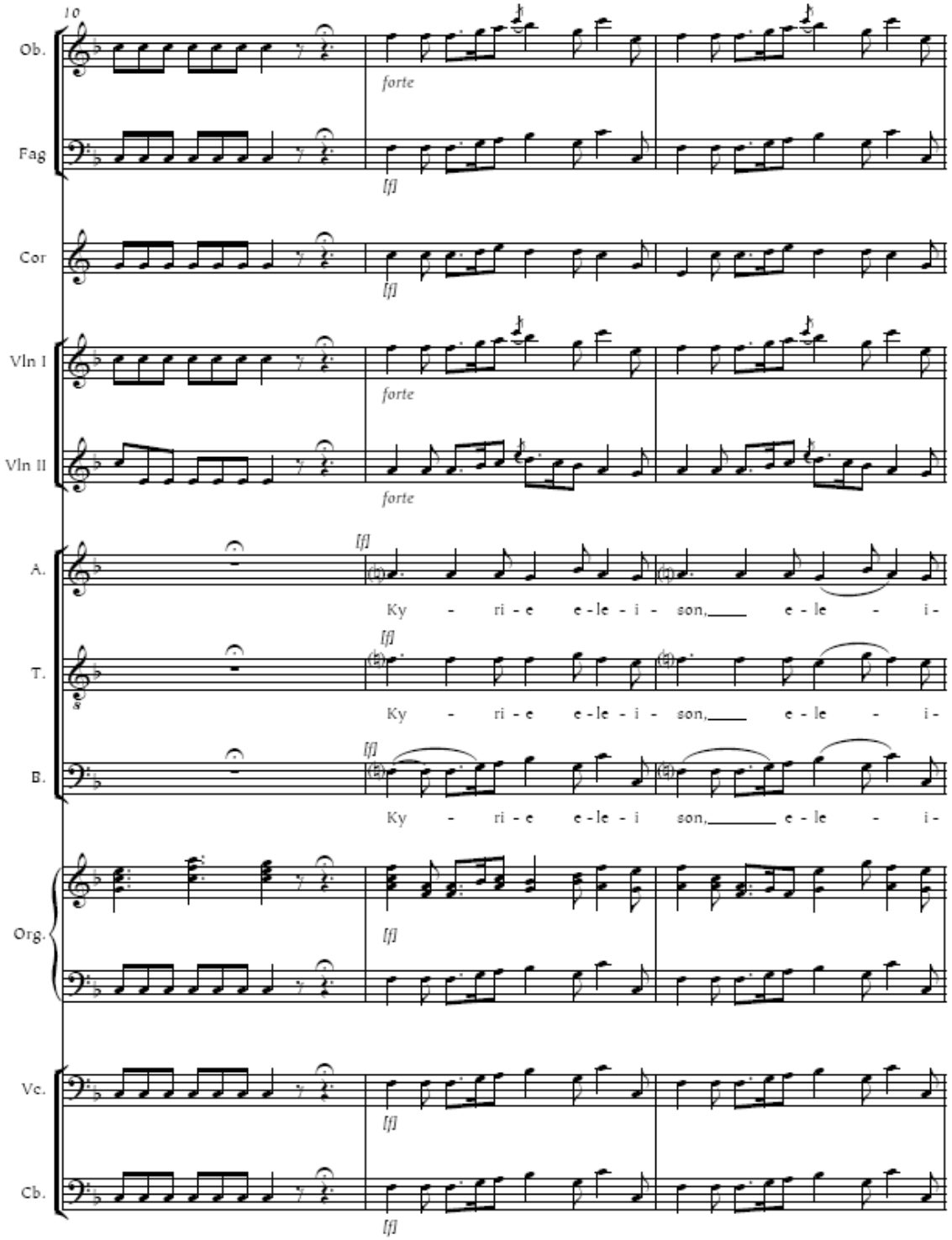
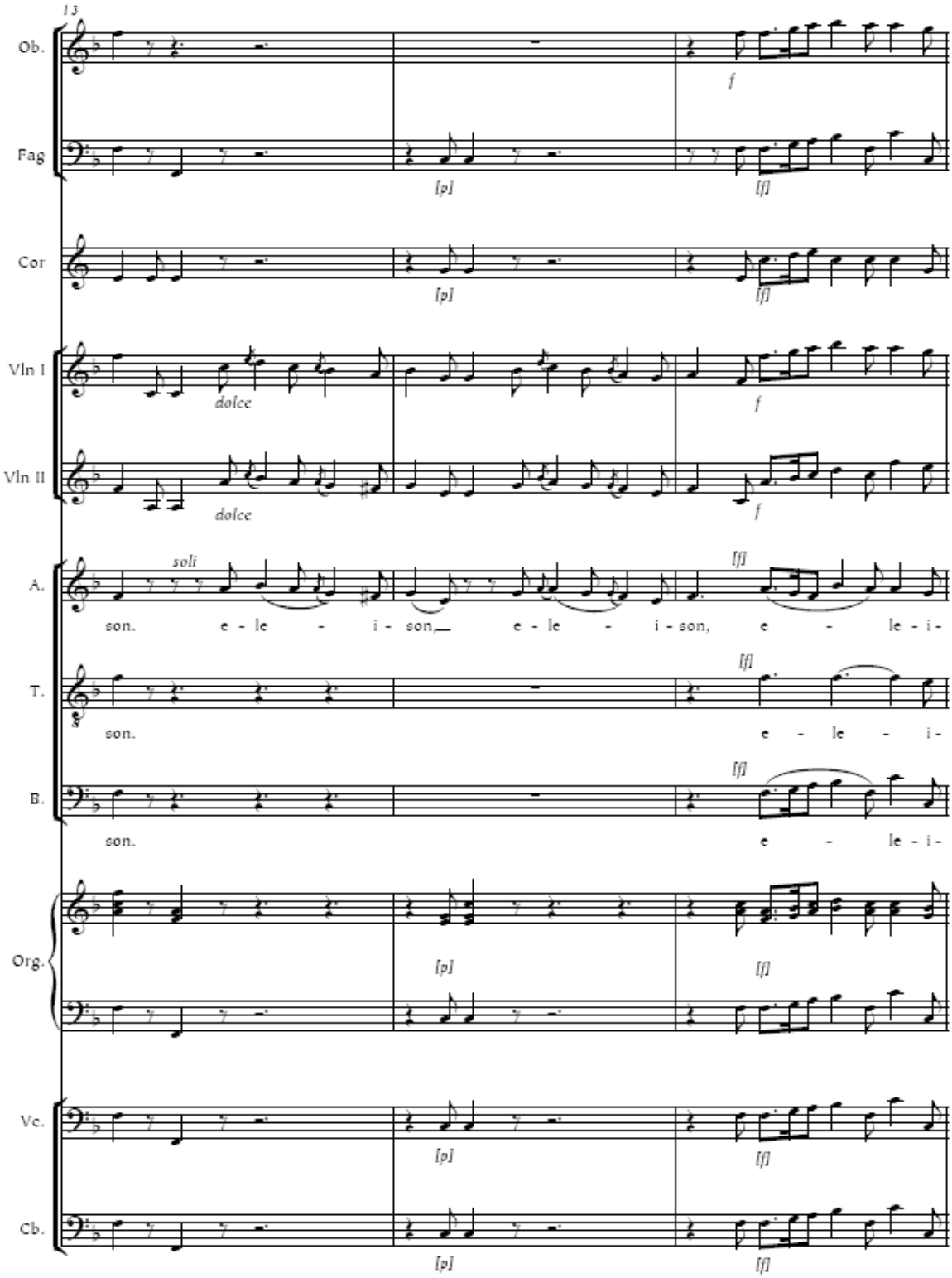
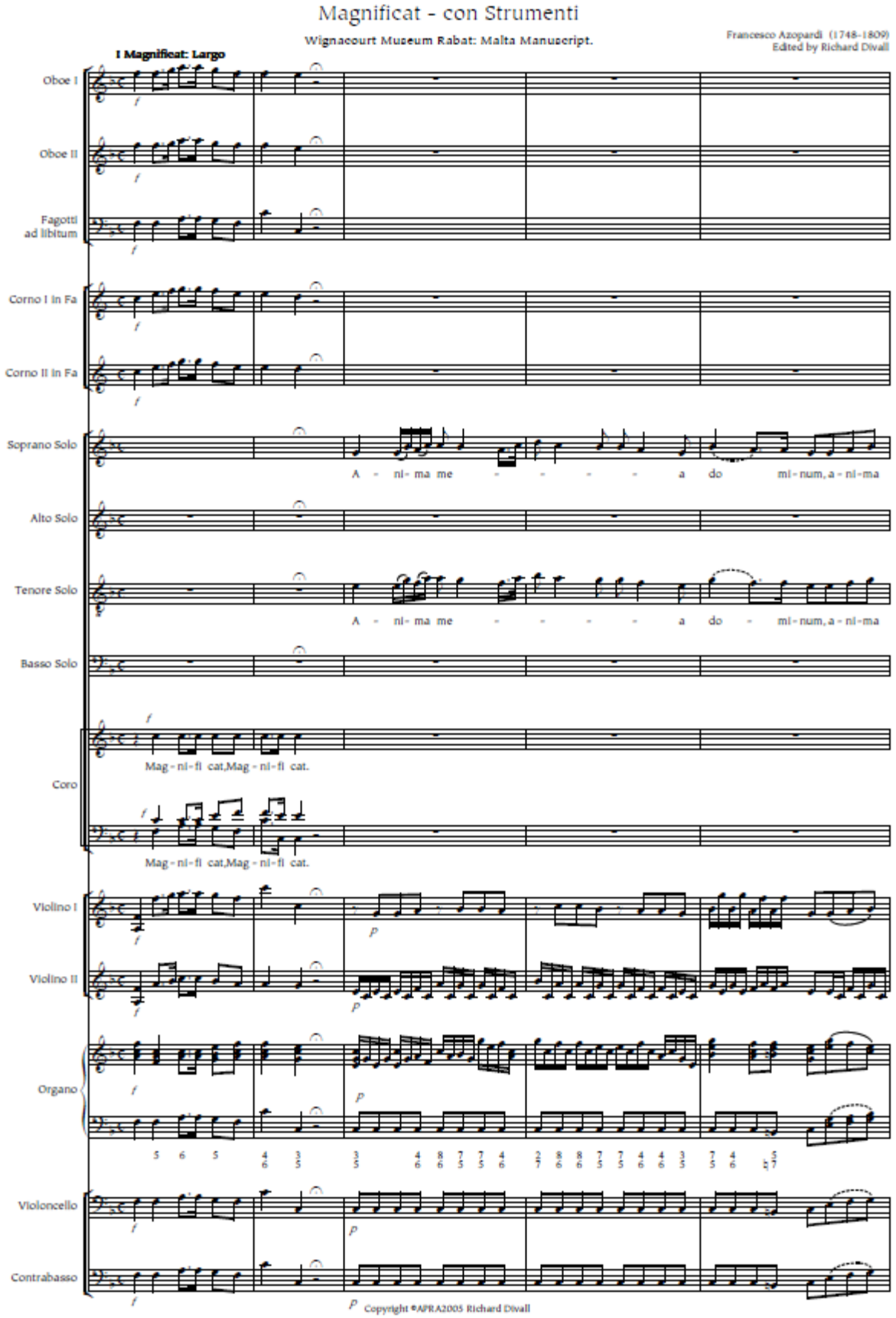
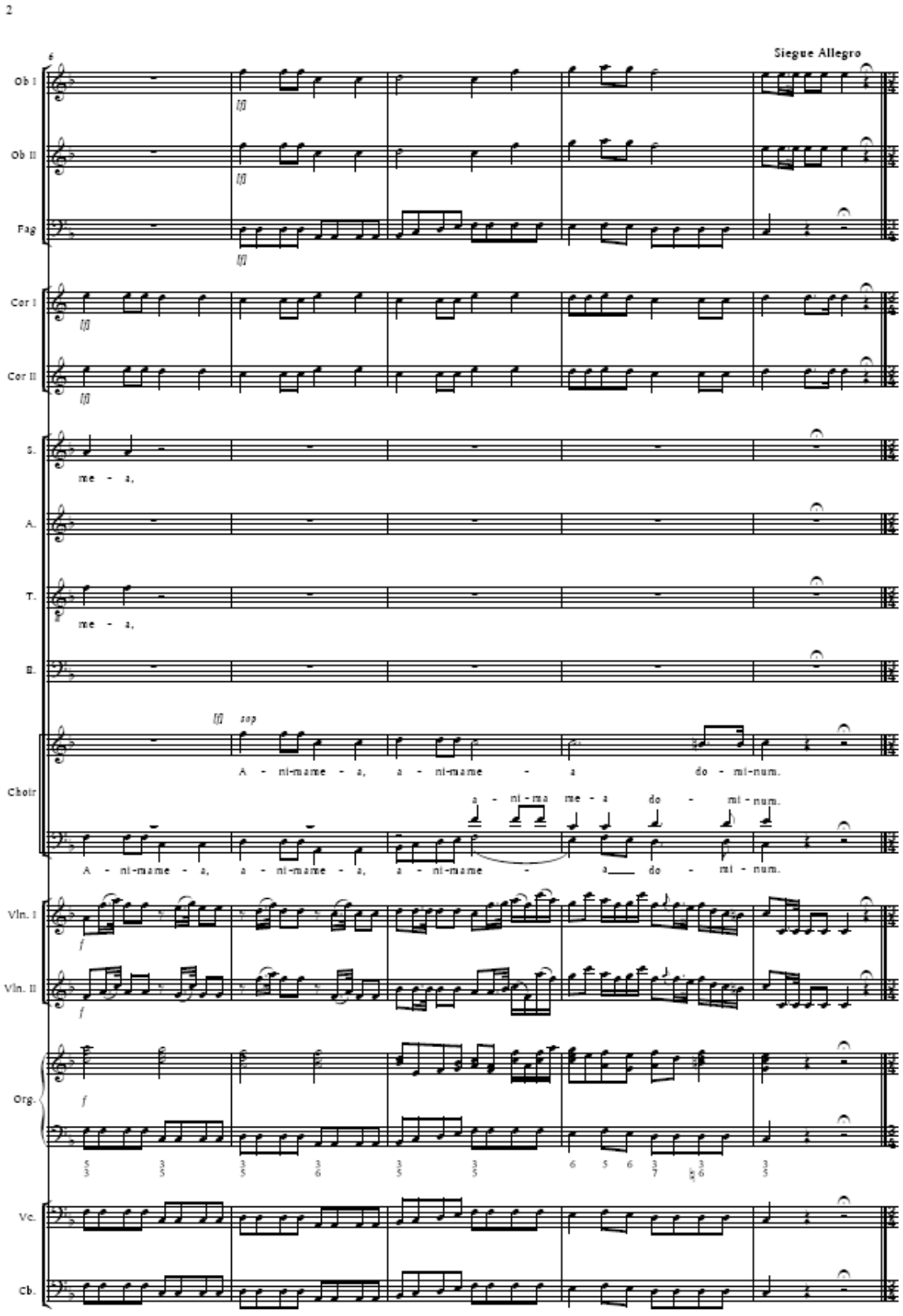
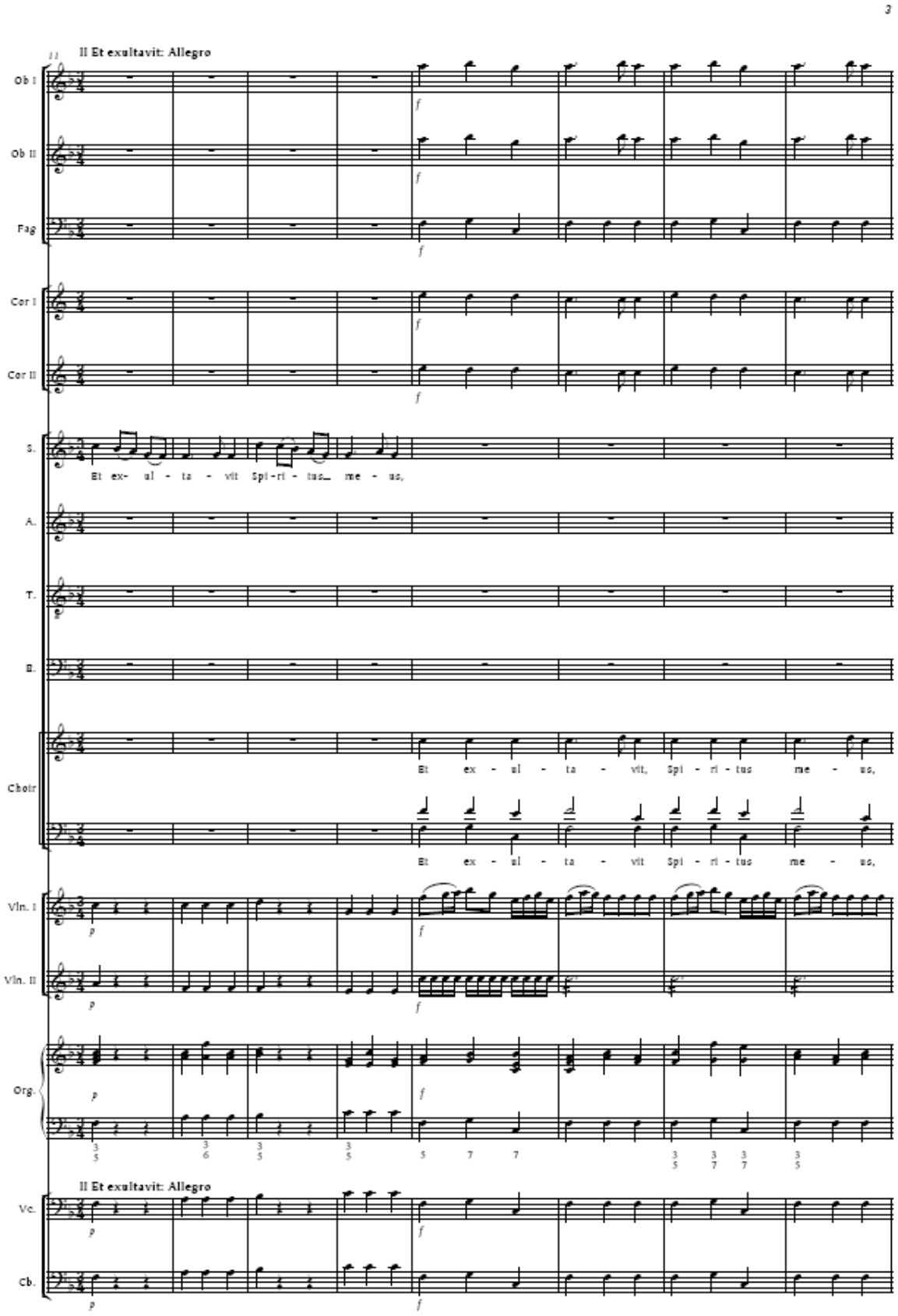

4
10
Ob.
Fag
Cor
Vln I
Vln II
A.
T.
B.
Org.
Vc.
Cb.
forte
[f]
Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i -
Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, e - le - i -
Ky - ri - e e - le - i son, e - le - i -


13
Ob.
Fag
Cor
Vln I
Vln II
A.
T.
B.
Org.
Vc.
Cb.
dolce
dolce
soli
son. e - le - i - son, e - le - i - son, e - le - i -
son. e - le - i -
son. e - le - i -
[p]
[f]
f


Magnificat - con Strumenti
Wignacourt Museum Rabat: Malta Manuscript.
Francesco Azopardi (1748-1809)
Edited by Richard Divall
I Magnificat: Largo
Oboe I
Oboe II
Fagotti ad libitum
Corno I in Fa
Corno II in Fa
Soprano Solo
A - ni - ma me - - - - - a do mi - num, a - ni - ma
Alto Solo
Tenore Solo
A - ni - ma me - - - - - a do - mi - num, a - ni - ma
Basso Solo
Coro
Mag - ni - fi cat,Mag - ni - fi cat.
Mag - ni - fi cat,Mag - ni - fi cat.
Violino I
Violino II
Organo
Violoncello
Contrabasso
Copyright ©APRA2005 Richard Divall


2
Segue Allegro
Ob I
Ob II
Fag
Cor I
Cor II
S.
me - a,
A.
T.
me - a,
B.
sop
A - ni-mame - a, a - ni-mame - a do - mi-num.
Choir
a - ni-ma me - a do - mi-num.
A - ni-mame - a, a - ni-mame - a, a - ni-mame - a do - mi-num.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Org.
Vc.
Cb.


II Et exultavit: Allegro
Ob I
Ob II
Fag
Cor I
Cor II
S.
Et ex- ul - ta - vit Spi-ri - tus me - us,
A.
T.
B.
Choir
Et ex - ul - ta - vit, Spi - ri - tus me - us,
Et ex - ul - ta - vit Spi - ri - tus me - us,
Vln. I
Vln. II
Org.
II Et exultavit: Allegro
Vc.
Cb.

Like his own teacher Nicola Sala, Azopardi was also a music theorist, and the author of a key work *Il Musico Prattico*. Initially issued in two Italian versions by the author, it was later translated and published in two editions in French *(Le Musicien Pratique),* the first in 1786 with a recommendation by André Grétry, and a second edition in 1824. [112]

Appointed in January 1787 to the position of *maestro di cappella* of the Mdina Cathedral, Azopardi had unofficially carried out the duties of that post for the previous ten years, and thereafter until his death on 6 February 1809. Following the flight of Isouard from Malta after the French capitulation, and the devolution of the Conventual Church in Valletta to the Church on Malta as a Co-Cathedral, Azopardi was appointed joint *maestro di cappella* of both cathedrals. 'He was the first to occupy the two simultaneous titles and positions at both the Cathedral at Mdina and the Co-Cathedral in Valletta'.[113] Although it is cited that he was buried in St John's in Valletta,[114] the site of the tomb has been lost, and Azopardi now has an inlaid marble tombstone as a tribute in the Mdina Cathedral.[115] He was succeeded by his other pupil, Pietro Paolo Bugeja (1772-1828), who for some nine years had been his assistant.[116]

[112] Dion Buhagiar, *Il Musico Pratico* (London, Ontario: University of Western Ontario, 1988).
[113] Buhagiar, *Maltese Baroque Composers*, 50, n. 32.
[114] Ulderico Rolandi, *Musica e Musicisti a Malta* (Livorno: 1932), 57.
[115] Installed in 1867.
[116] Bugeja is gradually being recognised as a composer of some stature. His music is classical and austere in style. His Overture to his *Azione Sacra, Gioas, Re di Giuda* (ed. Divall), and the *Incipit oratio Jeremiae prophetae* (ed. Michael Laus) have been recorded. The latter work is found on CD Gega GR17 (2012).

6.

Palermo and Naples.

On his return to Malta in late 1789 or 1790 Nicolò worked in his father's office, and later was sent by Fortunato to Palermo to act as a 'merchant's assistant' in the firm of the wealthy merchants G. B. Mattei.[117] Isouard was later able to repay Mattei for this employment opportunity. In 1798, Mattei's son was living in the West Municipality and had been chosen by the French authorities to be sent with 30 others, including young men from the Poussielgue, Testaferrata and Apap families, to study in France. The commencement of the Allied naval blockade stopped any such scheme.[118]

The Sicilian firm operated by Giovanni Battista Mattei was influential in the mercantile trade in the Mediterranean. On 19 November 1799, the Portuguese commander of the Allied forces blockading the then besieged Valletta, Domingos Xavier de Lima, the Marquis de Nizza (Niza),[119] sent a request to General Vaubois, asking that the Mattei's fourteen year old son be allowed to return to his father in Sicily.[120] Isouard, still in Valletta, would have advised Vaubois to accede to his former employer's request, and Vaubois allowed the young Mattei to return to Palermo.

Another link for Isouard and his family with Sicily and Naples, was the traveller and Bergamasque poet, Carlo Castone della Torre di Rezzonico (1742-1796), who visited Malta in September 1793.[121] During this visit he informed his friend de Rohan that he intended to apply to join the Order, but his early death prevented this from occurring.[122] His posthumous diary of the trip was published in Como in 1819.[123] He carried letters of

[117] Marie Briquet/David Charlton, 'Isouard, Nicolas', *The New Grove,* and Vella Bondin, in *Azzopardi*, 22. G. B. Mattei, or Joannes Baptista Mattei was the godfather on the ninth child in the Isouard Xuereb family, Amabilis. He was also a witness on Isouard's death certificate in Paris in 1818.
[118] Testa, *The French in Malta,* 334-5.
[119] Don Domingos Xavier de Niza (1765-1802).
[120] Testa, *The French in Malta,* 688.
[121] Thomas Freller, *Malta and the Grand Tour* (Malta: Midsea Books, 2009), 39, 75, 232-34. Born in Bergamo, Rezzonico had been based at the Court of Filippo I of Bourbon-Parma, in that Italian city. He was a close friend of Saint Priest who was the possible dedicatee of Isouard's first opera *Casaciello*.
[122] *Ibid.* 266-7.
[123] Some sources give the date of the Maltese journey as 1795.

introduction to Frà Francesco Antonio Pignatelli di Belmonte (Grand Priory of Naples),[124] and a relation of the *Principe* di Belmonte, who later assisted Isouard in Naples, to the Chevalier de Saint Priest, and more importantly 'to the bankers Isouard and Mattei', who are described as *primi banchieri de quest' isole.*[125] Obviously the Palermitan firm of Mattei also had an office in Valletta at the time, in which the Isouard family were possibly involved.

Palermo, the capital of Sicily, was a centre of some importance to Malta, due to its proximity for shipping and commerce with the islands. Significant trade between the two centres was in grain, oranges, honey, anise and cumin. Goethe, when he was visiting the city and the palace of the Viceroy on 8 April 1787, found the reception hall fairly empty, 'except for one cheerful little man, a German Knight of Malta', Frà Giuseppe Statella, who had been born in Palermo into a family that had given five knights to the Order.[126]

After some time working in Palermo, and studying music with Giuseppe Amendola, Nicolò was sent to Naples where he worked with the German banking firm of Charles Cutler and Christian Heigelin, [127] during which time he commenced study in counterpoint with Nicola Sala (1713-1801).[128] There is a Masonic connection here between Fortunato, and these two merchant bankers based in Naples. Christian Heigelin (1744-1820), was a merchant and banker and from 1790-3 served as the Consul General for Denmark in Naples. He was a member of two of the Neapolitan Lodges, 'Perfect Union', and also *della Vittoria*.[129] His business partner, Charles Cutler, a *negoziante inglese*, was a member of another Lodge in Naples, called the 'Well Chosen'. Both Lodges had been founded around 1769 and Knights of Malta were listed amongst their members, including Frà Gaimbattista Spiriti and the

[124] Ruolo, 79.
[125] Freller, *Malta and the Grand Tour*, 233.
[126] Bonazzi. Vol. 2, 214. Statella was obviously not German.
[127] Marie Briquet/David Charlton, 'Isouard, Nicolas', *The New Grove*. Here the names in the entry on Isouard as cited as *Culter and Herzelin*.
[128] In *Azzopardi*, 22 Vella Bondin correctly notes the firm as *Cutler and Heigelin*.
[129] Edward Eugene Stolper, *Le Massoneria settecentesca nel Regno di Napoli.* Published as a series of eight articles in the *Rivista Massonica d'Italia* 1974-1978 (Chivasso, Turin: Gruppo Editoriale 2013). At the time that Isouard was in Naples, the Masonic Lodges played a significant role in society and politics. Originally abolished around 1751 by King Charles III and his Prime Minister Bernardo Tanucci, the Lodges were re-established in 1776, following Tanucci's dismissal. Acton, 175.

Commander of Cavalry, Frà Francesco Marulli. Frà Deodat de Dolomieu also had some connections with Cutler and Heigelin.[130]

As a young man with French sympathies, Jacobin and masonic connections, and one who had seen the ferment of the French Revolution, Isouard arrived in Naples at a crucial time in the history of the kingdom. Queen Maria Carolina, a Hapsburg and sister of Marie-Antoinette of France, had inclined toward reform, as instituted in Austria under her brother the Emperor Joseph. And like her brother, she had been persuaded to become patroness of the masonic movement in her husband's kingdom.[131] But the execution of the French Queen transformed Maria Carolina into a committed counter-revolutionary, and from 1791 the masonic lodges were moved against by a nervous Neapolitan Government. Jacobin conspiracies were becoming common, and reformists and aristocratic malcontents had come under serious suspicion, leading to their arrests from 1794 onwards. In a letter to the Marchese di Gallo, she described the local nobility as, 'the most corrupted and evil of all classes……..they are true vipers'.[132] From the early part of the decade, the city was in a political and intellectual fervour, one which led to a virtual civil war after the arrival of French forces in 1798.

It must have been in this period that Fortunato realised that his son was not focused on a commercial career, and accepted that Nicolò should study music. Isouard had developed an engaging personality and social graces; assets that stood him in good stead in pursuing a career in the arts, and in seeking essential patronage from wealthy individuals. It is worth quoting Joseph Vella Bondin who writes:

> 'Isouard's portraits show that he was handsome, youthful-looking, with regular features, a broad forehead and striking pensive eyes. As a boy, he did well in his musical studies, and showed an exceptional mind, gifted with the ability to soak up and retain all that he had been taught. He blossomed into a virtuoso pianist, a

[130] *Ibid.*
[131] John A. Davis. *Naples and Napoleon. Southern Italy and the European Revolutions 1780-1860* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), 68. There was even a masonic lodge for ladies of the aristocracy, founded by one of the Queen's favourites, Princess Ottaiano.
[132] Letter, April 1795. Davis, 76-77. Di Gallo later became the Neapolitan Ambassador to Napoleonic France under Murat.

> sensitive organist, an outstanding glass harmonica player, besides performing well on several other instruments'.[133]

There are several portraits and engravings of Isouard, and they confirm Vella Bondin's opinion. Several of these are reproduced in *Azzopardi*, including an oil painting, by an anonymous painter, in private hands in a Maltese collection. There is the bust of Nicolò on the Paris *Opéra*, with the erroneous dates of 1775-1818. An engraving of the composer was etched by Edme Quenedey de Ricet, where the composer, wearing his Cross of a *Donat*, is innacurately listed as the *Dernier Maitre de Chapelle de l'Ordre*. Lithographs were issued by Charles Motte (1785-1836), published in the journal *Miroir* and by Julien, printed in the *Galerie Universelle*.

In 1824, a medal (sized 4.1 cms), with a portrait in bronze was designed and struck by Adrien Hippolyte Veyrat.[134] It includes both the composer's birth and the death dates, again incorrectly engraved as 1775-1817.[135] On the obverse, of the portrait of the composer, are listed twelve of his operas.[136] In 2002, the Central Bank of Malta issued a five Malta *Lire* coin, dedicated to Isouard, and bearing an engraved portrait of the composer by the Maltese artist Noel Galea Bason. The date of birth of the composer was again listed erroneously as 1775, and the coin was withdrawn from circulation in 2008 when the Euro was introduced as the monetary unit on Malta.

In Naples Isouard studied at the Conservatorio di Santa Maria della Pietà dei Turchini, where at the time Nicola Sala was the *secondo maestro*. In this period there were three music conservatoriums in Naples: Santa Maria di Loreto founded in 1537, Sant' Onofrio a Capuana (1578), and the Turchini (1583).[137] These Neapolitan schools produced such composers as Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, Francesco Durante, Leonardo Leo, Niccolò Jommelli and Niccolò Piccinni. But with the establishment of the Parthenopean Republic, the flight of the

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[133] The glass harmonica enjoyed popularity for around forty years, and both Mozart and Donizetti wrote for the instrument, the latter as the obbligato instrument in his first version of the 'Mad Scene' from *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Vella Bondin, *Azzopardi*, 22

[134] Adrien Hippolyte Veyrat (1803-1883). French medallist of dinstinction.

[135] Andorfer and Epstein, *Musica in Numis* (Vienna: 1907). Item no. 151 in the catalogue.

[136] Divall collection. This medal is reproduced in the Introduction to this Thesis.

[137] The Poveri dei Gesù Cristo which had been founded in 1599 had been amalgamated with the Turchini in 1743.

Bourbons to Sicily, and the resulting dislocations of the Napoleonic period, these schools were gradually reduced in number. Eventually they were merged into one conservatorium, the Collegio di San Sebastiano, later to be formed in 1889 into the current existing school and music library in Naples, the Conservatorio di San Pietro a Maiella.[138]

Isouard's teachers in Sicily and Naples included Giuseppe Amendola (1750-1808), Nicola Sala (1713-1801), and Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi (1728-1804), a most successful opera composer. It is important to examine the career and musical styles of these teachers.

Born in Palermo, Giuseppe Amendola was a composer who had connections with Malta. Amendola was active as a teacher, and around 1790 or 1791, the young Isouard, although seemingly destined for a career in commerce, took lessons in harmony from him, examining the classical operas of the Neapolitan Leonardo Leo and the sacred music, oratorios and instrumental music of Francesco Durante.[139] Amendola' s only known opera, *Il Begliar-Bey di Caramana* was premiered in Madrid in 1776, staged possibly due to the influence of King Charles III (1716-1788) and Queen Maria Amalia of Spain, who had previously ruled in the Two Sicilies. The libretto was by Girolamo Tonioli. The work was later presented in the *Carnevale* in Bologna in 1778, possibly under the title of *La Schiava Fedele*, with ballet music by Carlo Canobbio.[140] Some of his rare music has found its way into Maltese collections, and in the Wignacourt Museum there is a sonata for pianoforte or cembalo. The section of this sonata reproduced below provides an excellent example of the musical style and keyboard technique that would have been assimilated by the young Isouard.

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[138] Salvatore Di Giacomi, *Conservatorio di Sant' Onofrio a Capuana e quello di Santa Maria della Pietà dei Turchini* (Naples: n.p. 1924).

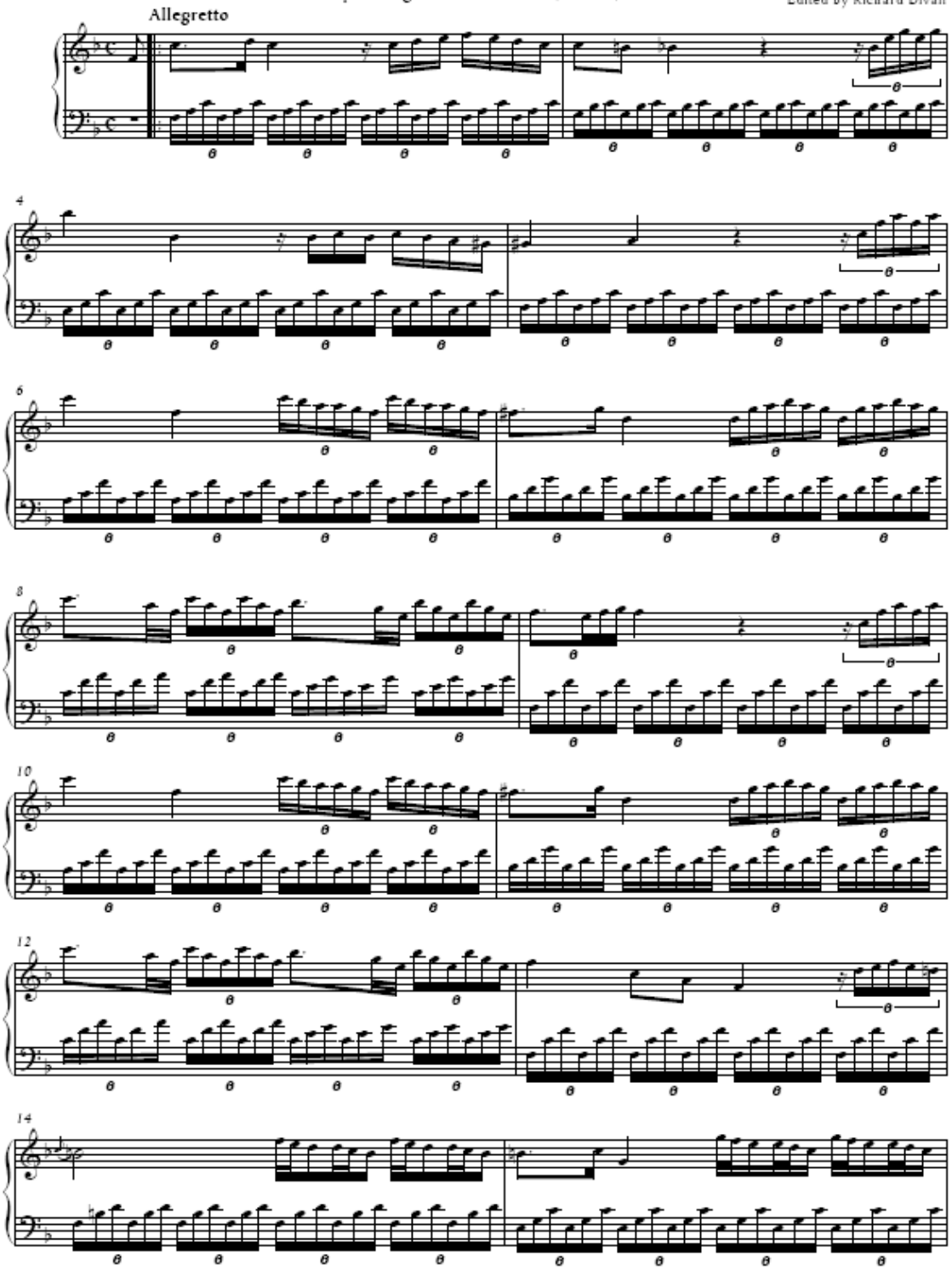
[139] James L. Jackman, 'Amendola, Giuseppe', *The New Grove*. The influence of Durante's compositional style on Vella has been commented on by performers.

[140] Corrado Ricci, *I Teatri di Bologna* (Bologna: 1888. Facsimile reprint, Bologna: Arnaldo Forni, 1965), 495.

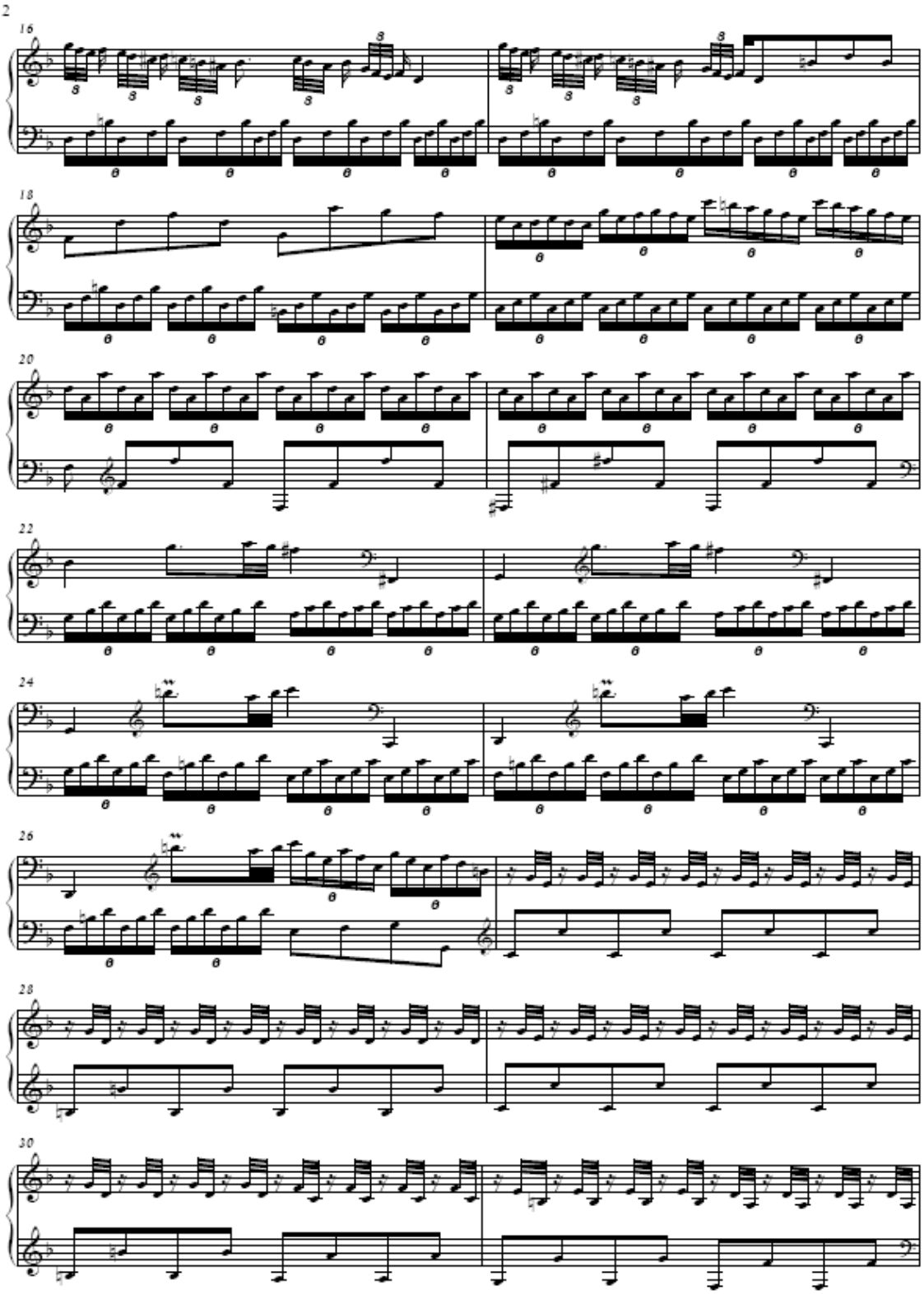
Sonata per Cembalo in Fa maggiore

Manuscript - Wignacourt Museum; Rabat, Malta.

Giuseppe Amendola
Palermo c1750-Palermo 1808
Edited by Richard Divall



cAPRA Richard Divall/Wignacourt Museum 2006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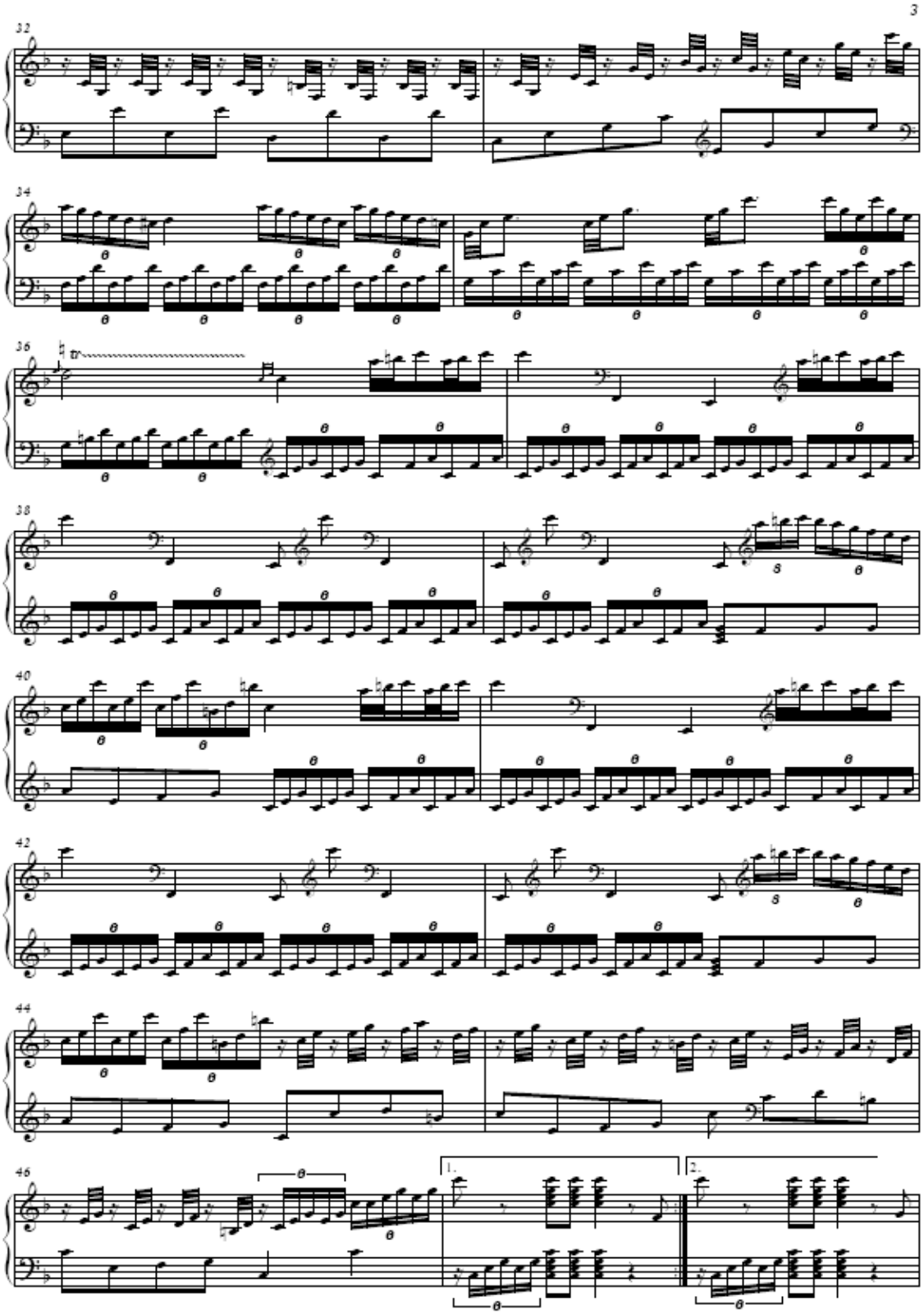
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42
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1.
2.

In Naples, Isouard's teacher Nicola Sala (1713-1801), had a lifetime association at the Turchini. He had studied at the same *conservatorio* from 1732 to 1740 under both Nicola Fago, and Leonardo Leo. His first opera, *Vologeso* to a libretto by the Venetian Apostolo Zeno, was first produced in Rome in 1737, followed by a season in Lisbon in 1739.[141] He was appointed *maestro di capella* at the Royal Chapel in Naples in 1745, succeeding Leonardo Leo in that position. He was held in high regard by the Bourbon Court and his operas *Zenobia* (1761), *Demetrio* (1762), and *Merope* (1769), were all staged at the Real Teatro di San Carlo in Naples.[142]

But it was as a teacher of young composers that Sala made his mark. As well as Isouard, both Gaspare Spontini and Carlo Lenzi were amongst his successful pupils. For 47 years Sala taught at the Turchini, eventually becoming Director (*primo maestro*), of the school in 1793 (or 1795), until his retirement in 1799, two years before his death. Apart from his personal tuition and classes, Sala's greatest contribution to young composers was through his authorship of many textbooks and studies on the fugue, *solfeggi* and canons. Possibly because of his major textbook, *Regole del contrappunto pratico* (Naples 1794), Sala acquired a considerable reputation for counterpoint. His works, particularly the numerous sacred works written for the Royal Chapel, have been recently revived in his own birth place of Tocco Caudio, near Benevento, in the eighteenth century a Papal enclave.

During Isouard's early period at the Turchini, the Director was the poet and scholar Saverio Mattei (1744-1795), who had been appointed to the position in 1791.[143] Mattei was a distinguished man of many talents, being a scholar of eastern languages, a writer on religious subjects, as well as being a lawyer and musician. He had been a frequent correspondent with Metastasio, and in the year of his death submitted a report to the Court in Naples on making the *conservatorii* more administratively efficient.[144] He was the author

[141] François-Joseph Fétis, *Dictionnaire de musique* (Paris: 1844).
[142] James L. Jackman, 'Amendola, Giuseppe', *The New Grove.*
[143] Michael Robinson, *Naples and Neapolitan Opera* (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1972), 20.
[144] Enrico Fubini, *Music and Culture in Eighteenth Century Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 264.

of the libretto of Mozart's oratorio and reworking of the Mass in C Minor, *Davide Penitente*.[145]

The Turchini had originally flourished under the patronage of Philip II of Spain, but toward the end of the eighteenth century its influence had started to wane. Each conservatorio had a balanced regime of study that encompassed both music and a liberal arts education, and a student was admitted on payment of an entrance fee.[146] After Mass, the morning was devoted to music studies and composition, and specific teachers were provided for both strings and woodwinds. At the Turchini, Isouard would have been taught woodwind technique by Giuseppe Prota (1737-1807), the brother of Tommaso Prota, who served as a composer during the 1750's on Malta. Composition was given through lectures and assignments, the written studies being written on a *cartelle*, which was a form of early blackboard, made out of varnished linen. Clerics on the staff taught Grammar, Latin, Mathematics, History, Geography, Literature and Poetry in the afternoon. Overcrowding in the schools was not unknown - something that was common throughout Naples.[147] Particular attention was given to composition for the church, and the account books of the *Conservatorio dei Poveri di Gesù Cristo* list many entries relating to performances of Masses and Vespers, which brought a considerable income to the schools.[148] From the *Regole* of 1769, we know that each day began with the psalm *Laudate pueri Dominum*, followed by school exercises. A meal was accompanied by a recitation of spiritual exercises, and later in the day individual study was carried out.[149] The composer Niccolò Piccinni commented to the English commentator Charles Burney (1726-1814), that 'the boys were admitted from eight or ten to twenty years of age; that when they are taken in young they are bound for eight years; but when more advanced their admission is difficult'.[150] Isouard entered the school around the age of sixteen. On visiting the city Burney commented on the regime of

[145] Mozart. *Davide Penitente* KV 469 (composed in 1785, and adapted from the Mass in C minor KV 427). Curiously in the Bärenreiter *Complete Mozart Edition* of this work, the librettist is listed as *unbekannt*.
[146] Kurt Sven Markstrom, *The Operas of Leonardo Vinci* (New York: Pendragon Press, 2007). As a boarder, the composer Leonardo Vinci (c1690-1730) paid an annual fee of thirty-six ducats, which was later reduced because of the young student's musical contributions to the school.
[147] Markstrom, *Vinci*, 7-11.
[148] *Ibid*, 10.
[149] Giorgio Sanguinetto, *The Art of Partimento: History, Theory and Practice* (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 38.
[150] Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in France and Italy* (London: Becket, 1773), 311.

study that was the policy at the four conservatoriums in the city. He writes an often quoted observation:

> The only vacation in these schools, in the whole year, is in the autumn, and that for a few days only: during the winter, the boys rise two hours before it is light, from which time they continue their exercises, an hour and a half at dinner excepted, till eight o'clock at night: and this constant perseverance for a number of years, with genius and good teaching, must produce musicians.[151]

In Naples, Isouard's easy going charm, a feature that is much commented on by his contemporaries, recommended him to the Princess Belmonte, who provided him with an introduction to the highly successful Neapolitan composer Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi. In encountering Anna Francesca Pignatelli, *Principessa* di Belmonte, Isouard gained an invaluable and powerful supporter, and became acquainted with one of the extraordinary characters of the eighteenth century.

Princess Belmonte was the wife of Prince Antonio Belmonte, the chief major domo of King Ferdinand of Naples and the Two Sicilies. A close friend of Queen Caroline, she was an artistic woman, and also one overly fond of young men. The great opera librettist and tasteful gossip, Pietro Metastasio (Trapassi), was a regular correspondent, with over 100 letters from Vienna addressed to her in Naples.[152] Her husband, Antonio, had been appointed Neapolitan Ambassador to Spain in 1795, and henceforth to the 'gigolo' Spanish Prime Minister, Manuel de Godoy (1767-1851). A secular Bailiff of the Order of Malta, Godoy had dreamt of usurping the position of Grand Master on Malta, and had been encouraged by Napoleon in that dream (see below). Relations with Godoy were not untroubled, and Belmonte was recalled to Naples in 1796. He was just in time, for he was instrumental in arranging the peace between Naples and Napoleon in June 1796.

His wife and Isouard's patron, Anna Francesca's proclivities were well known. In her diary of 1780, Mme Necker de Saussure (and cousin to Mme Anne Louise de Staël), writes that 'the Princess of Belmonte usually has three [lovers], the gentle Don Felice, the pretty Niccolino and the dark fellow whom I forget'. Isouard's good looks would not have gone unnoticed by

[151] Charles Burney, *Travels* (London: Glover Edition 1927), 63.
[152] Metastasio, *Tutte le Opera- Lettere*, vols. 3-5.

the Princess.[153] It is a tradition within some sections of the Isouard family that Catherine the Great of Russia wrote eleven love letters to Isouard before her death in 1796. Despite several attempts by Maltese historians, no letters have been forthcoming from the family.

The Parisian gossip, Count Joseph Thomas D'Espinchal (1748-1823), when visiting Naples as an émigré with the famous painter Mme Vigée Le Brun, left the following record of their visit. He described the Princess in his diary as:

> 'a lady who has been and was still conspicuously gallant in an amorous sense, although well over fifty. She is tall and well-proportioned and has a very noble bearing. No foreigners arrive in Naples without an introduction to her. She entertains them to perfection and is always rewarded by token of their gratitude. At present she is in charge of a handsome Pole, of whom she never loses sight for a single instant. She is apt to retire with him from the assembly now and then. The young man seems a little exhausted by his duties'.[154]

Isouard's time in Naples coincided with the presence in Naples of the British Ambassador, Sir William Hamilton, who had recently married the young Emma Hart. It was noted that compared to the Princess Belmonte, Emma Hamilton was almost respectable.[155] D'Espinchal was similarly thrilled by Emma Hart's (Hamilton) performance of the *tarantella*, and like Goethe, paid tribute to her beauty.[156] Presciently in his diary of 6 February 1796, D'Espinchal commented, 'beware of a revolution'.[157] During the French incursions into the Kingdom, the Princess di Belmonte revealed herself both as an opportunist and a turncoat, in – 'formerly being a monarchist, becoming a rabid republican in her sixties, and presiding over a salon of disgruntled Neapolitans'.[158] The young Isouard would have felt that he was in congenial company.[159]

[153] Acton, 184.
[154] Acton, 233-4.
[155] *Ibid.* 242.
[156] *Ibid.* 226
[157] *Ibid.* 228.
[158] *Ibid.* 479.
[159] *Ibid.* After the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, and the fall of Joachim Murat, the Princess Belmonte reconciled herself with King Ferdinand.

Through Principessa Belmonte's introduction, Guglielmi was a valuable catch for the young Isouard.[160] Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi (1728-1804) studied at the *Conservatorio Santa Maria di Loreto* under Francesco Durante, becoming a *primo maestrino* in 1750, but departing the school in 1754.[161] In a fifty year career in opera composition, he wrote no less than 90 operas, many of which were revived in new versions, as well as contributing to *pasticcios*, and writing numerous *sostituto* arias for operas other than his own. His style is well demonstrated below in a *sostituto* aria, *Sento omai che' a tanto affanno*. The manuscript is in the Wignacourt Museum Archives, and was intended for insertion into Paisiello's opera *Il Pirro* of 1790, first presented in Genoa in that year.[162] As an operatic composer, Guglielmi's vocal and orchestral composition styles were partly adopted by Isouard. Through his professional contacts and engagements in Vienna and Venice, Guglielmi was a thoroughly modern operatic composer, and his works contained the essential elements of the operas of Mozart - arias, duets, the use of chorus and large scale finale ensembles. He was also an accomplished and experienced composer in keyboard works and chamber music. This can be seen in the cembalo sonatas below, as well as in Guglielmi's opus two, early violin sonatas, possibly composed for Florence, and previously in the Ricasoli Collection in Florence. This influence is evident in these six sonatas, especially in his use of the trademark arpeggio bass line of final phrases.[163] Of some interest are Guglielmi's keyboard compositions, such as the collections of virtuoso *Toccate* for keyboard, probably harpsichord, with the works requiring double keyboards, held in the library of the great Abbey of Montecassino.[164] These stylistic influences will become clear when an assessment is undertaken on Isouard's dramatic works that date from 1794 - especially on

[160] The Princess was also a devoted supporter and friend of the two opera composers Davide Perez and Niccolò Jommelli. In July 1749 she facilitated Jommelli's introduction to Metastasio, who was enchanted by the young composer's worldly temperament. On 28 January 1750 he wrote to the great castrato Farinelli in Madrid, saying – 'Jommelli is the best maestro, of whom I have any knowledge, for words. Believe me, I am not being biased. You will find in him excessive ability combined with unmatched sweetness'. Metastasio *Opere*, III, p 468.

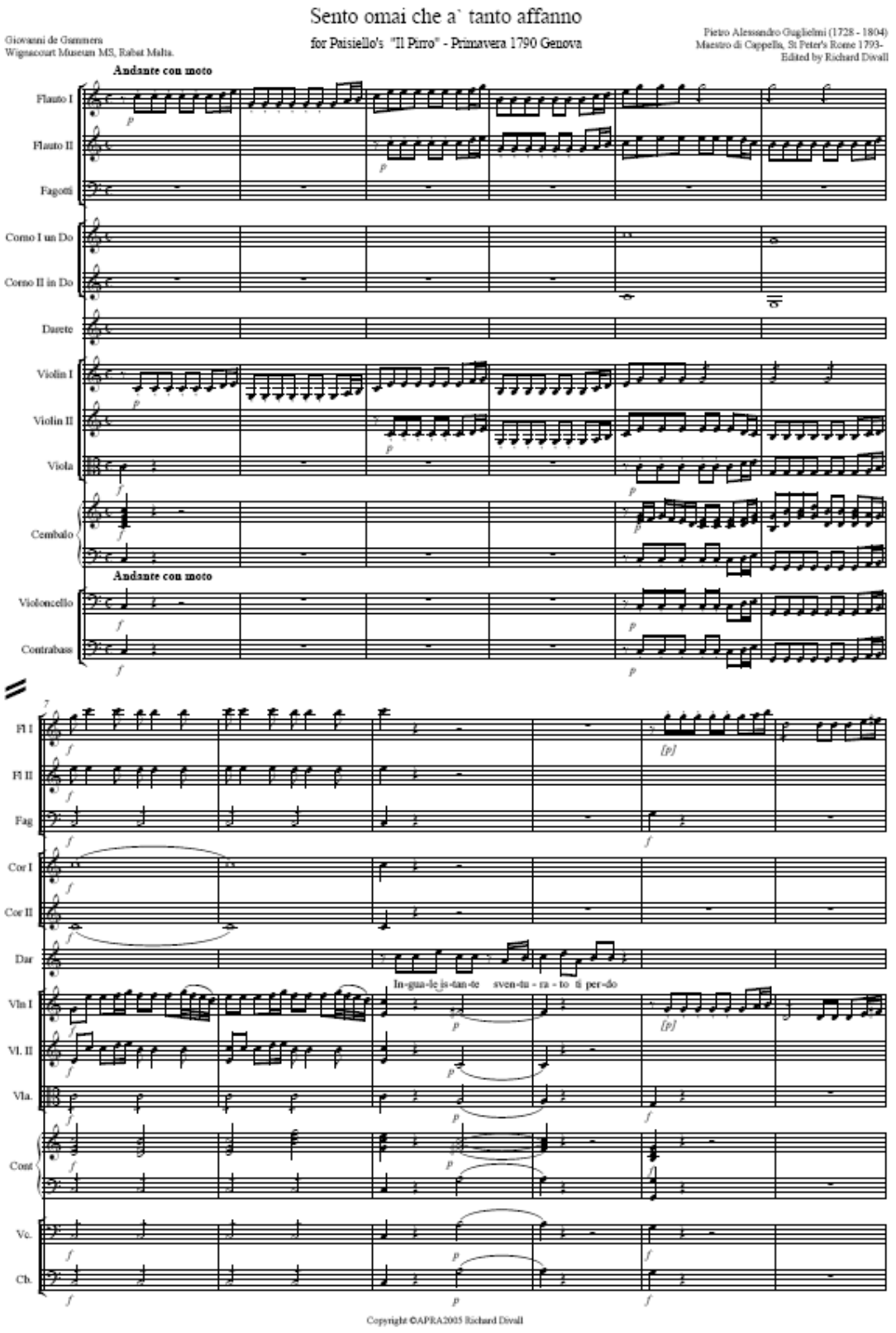
[161] There is still no definitive biography of Guglielmi, and the only modern study is Stefano Giampaoli, *Musica e teatro alla corte di Massa* (Carrara: Palazzo di S. Elisabetta, 1978). See also Anthony R. DelDonna 'The Operas of Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi (1728-1804)' PhD Diss. The Catholic University of America, 1997.

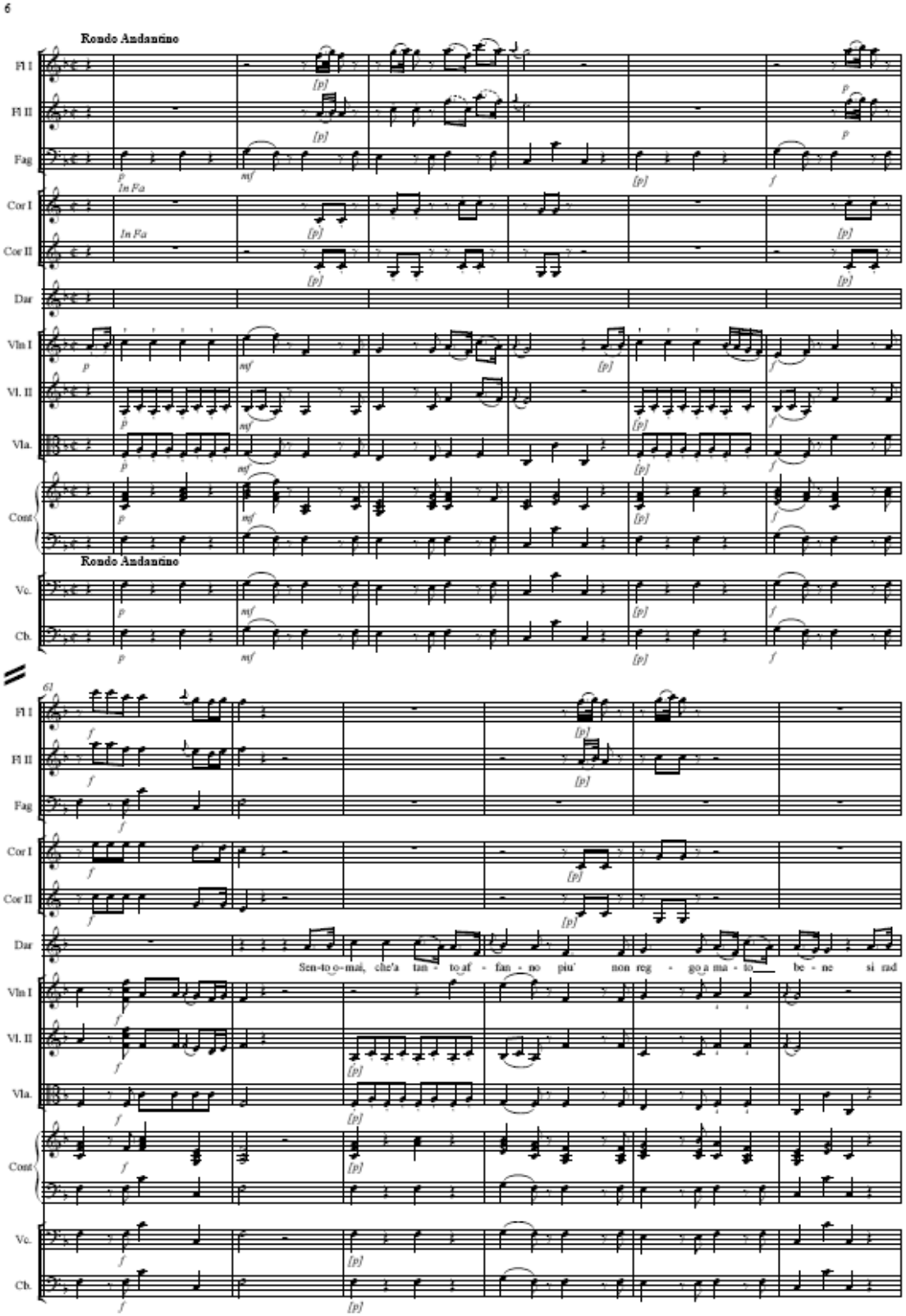
[162] Jno Leland Hunt, *Giovanni Paisiello-His Life as an Opera Composer* (USA: National Opera Association, 1975), 40. Hunt cites that *Pirro* was composed in 1787 but not performed until 1790 (Teatro San Carlo, 12 January 1790). Michael F. Robinson, 'Paisiello, Giovanni', *The New Grove* gives the premiere of the opera as San Carlo, Naples on 12 January 1787.

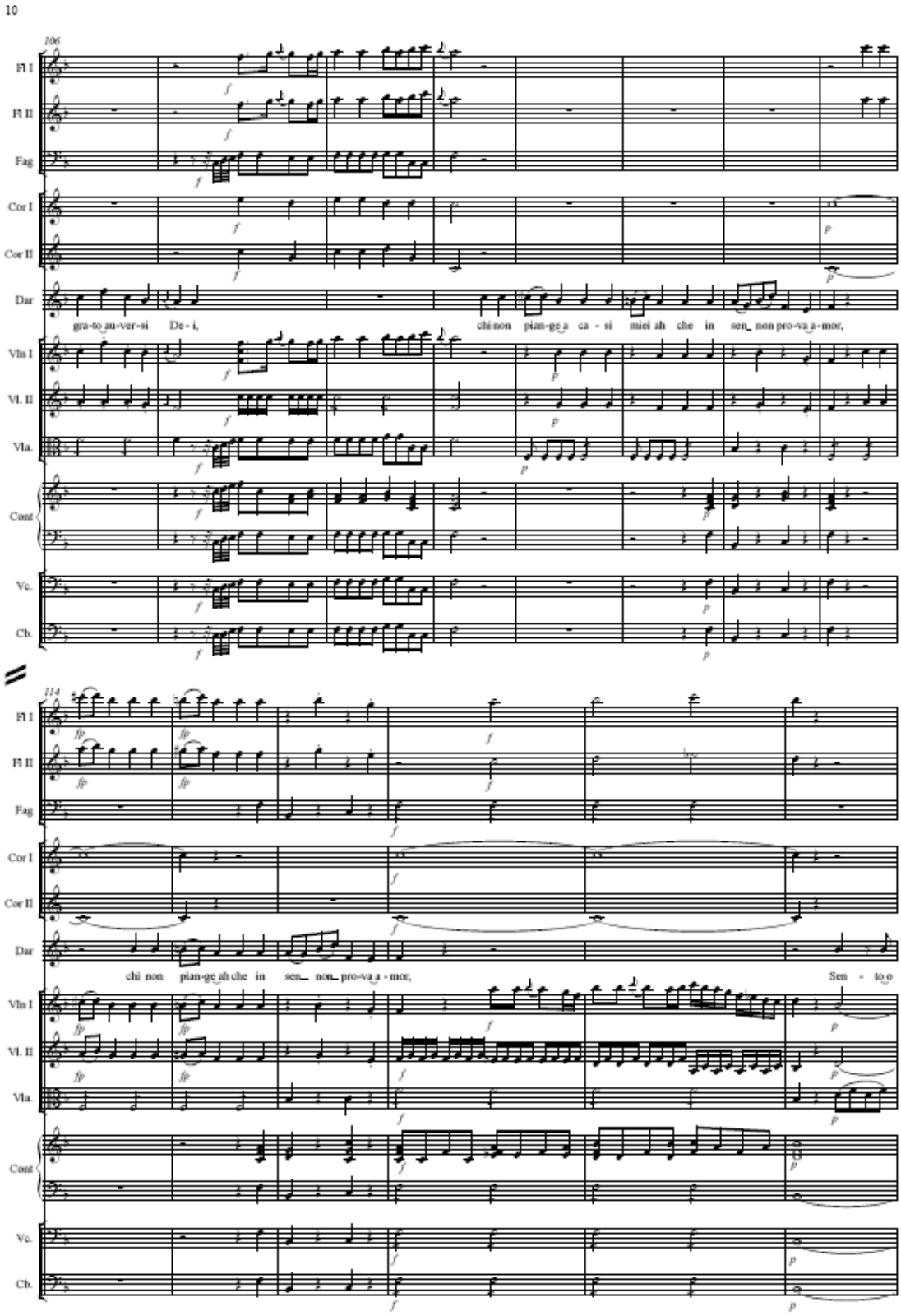
[163] The manuscripts of these opus two sonatas are now held in the University of Louisville Music Library, US-LOu, RISM-A/II-000124431-6.

[164] Montecassino Mus 1-B-9/1+. These works have been edited into modern edition by the author.

the full score of his second opera, *L'avviso ai maritati* (Advice for husbands), and on the two surviving arias of the Livorno premiered *opera seria, Artaserse*.




6
Rondo Andantino
Fl I
Fl II
Fag
In Fa
Cor I
In Fa
Cor II
Dar
Vln I
Vl. II
Vla.
Cont
Rondo Andantino
Vc.
Cb.
61
Fl I
Fl II
Fag
Cor I
Cor II
Dar
Sen-to o-mai, che'a tan - to af - fan - no piu' non reg - go a ma - to be - ne si rad
Vln I
Vl. II
Vla.
Cont
Vc.
Cb.


10
106
Fl I
Fl II
Fag
Cor I
Cor II
Dar
gra-zo au-ver-si De-i,
chi non pian-ge a ca-si mici ah che in sen_ non pro-va a-mor,
Vln I
Vl. II
Vla.
Cont
Vc.
Cb.
114
chi non pian-ge ah che in sen_ non_ pro-va a-mor,
Sen - to o

Guglielmi's career took him to Florence, Milan, London, Rome, and eventually Naples, where he took the young Isouard under his wing. He was considered by his contemporaries the equal of both Paisiello, and of Cimarosa, and wrote about one dozen *opere buffe* that became international successes. In London he collaborated with Johann Christian Bach in the 'improved' version of Gluck's *Orfeo* that was staged in the famous season of 1770, which was published in London in full orchestral score. Leaving Naples, on 7 March 1793 he succeeded Antonio Boroni (1738-1792) as *maestro di cappella* at St Peter's Basilica in Rome. His numerous sacred works date from this period in Rome and they, with his many oratorios, await detailed study. These sacred works continued to enjoy popularity. As late as 1820, Sievers cites works presented by the Oratorians in that year, as having been by Paisiello, Pasquale Anfossi, (the brother of Vincenzo Anfossi, the *prima organista* of the Conventual Church in Valletta), Ferdinando Paer and Guglielmi.[165]

One of Guglielmi's most popular oratorios was the *azione sacra, Debora e Sisara*, composed to a libretto by Carlo Sernicola. It was first presented as a staged work at the *Teatro San Carlo* during Lent in 1789, and from that date was performed in no less than twenty-one different cities before 1820, including London in 1795. It is a work full of dramatic interest, and large scale choruses.[166] The *azione sacra* was a form of theatrical sacred music that was often staged, or semi-staged in Italy and in southern Austria during the second half of the eighteenth century.[167] Guglielmi's opera *La virtuosa in Mergellina* (premiered at the Teatro Nuovo in Naples in 1785),[168] was staged in the *carnevale* at the Manoel Theatre in 1787.[169] His *opera buffa L'inganni amoroso*, mentioned below, was possibly performed in the same venue in 1798, at the time of the French invasion of Malta, and probably conducted by Isouard.

Concerning Guglielmi, let me provide an example of his keyboard writing, from the sonata number three, first movement, of this composer's opus three. According to the British

[165] Sievers, *Rom*, 208-9.
[166] Anthony R. Deldonna, *Opera, Theatrical Culture and Society in Late Eighteenth-Century Naples* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 147-191.
[167] Howard Smithers, *A History of the Oratorio –The Oratorio in the Classical Era* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), vol. 3.
[168] Alfred Loewenberg, *Annals of Opera 1597-1940* (London: John Calder, 1978), 3rd edition, 418.
[169] Xuereb, 26.

Library sources, composed around 1770, these six sonatas were published in a series in London by the firm of R Bremner, in The Strand. They are dedicated to Lady Catherine Hamilton, who at the time was the first wife of the English Ambassador to the Kingdom of Naples and the Two Sicilies, the writer and antiquarian Sir William Hamilton (1731-1803).[170]

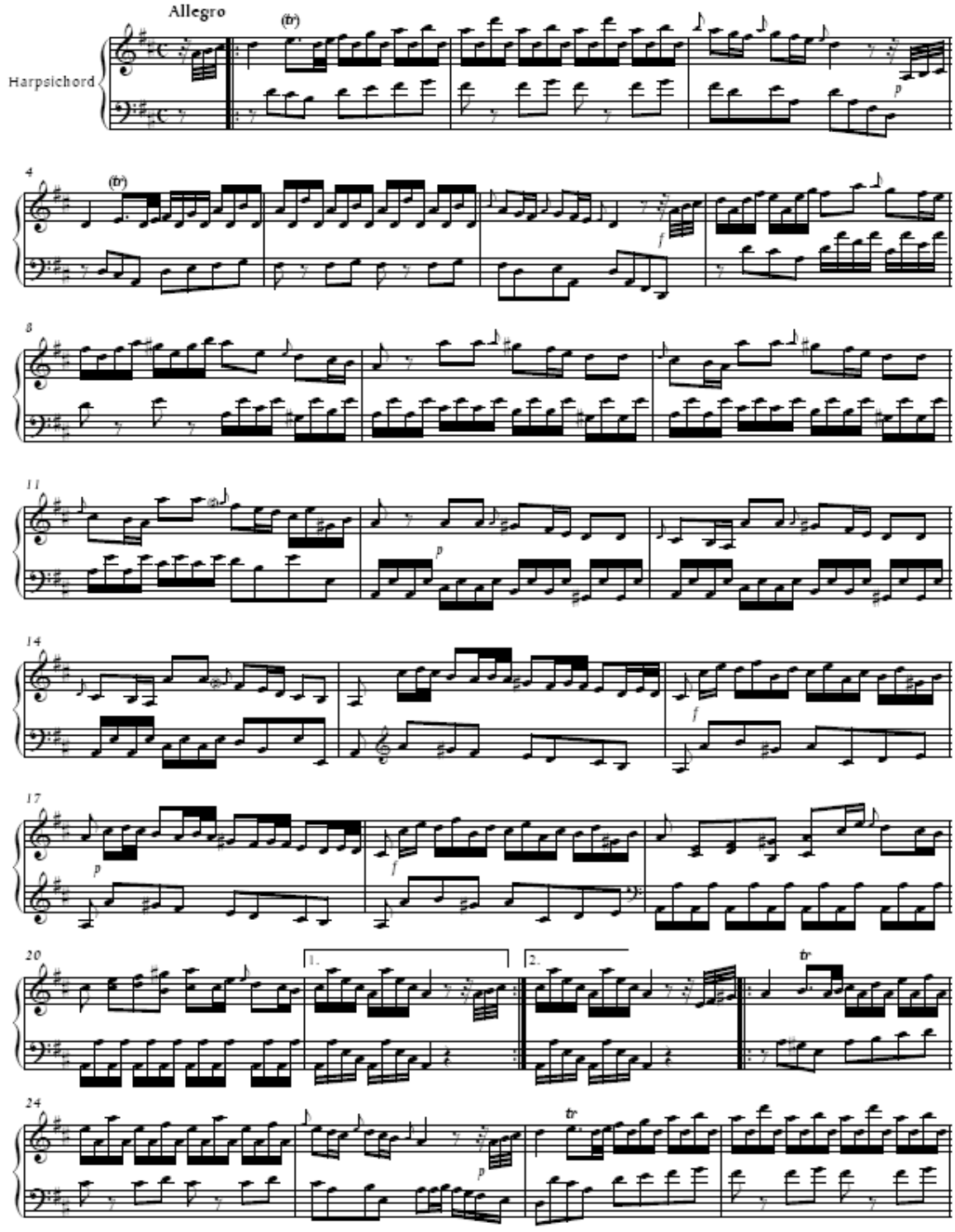
Hamilton was known to many of the great European travellers including Goethe and Winckelmann. An accomplished keyboard player, Catherine married Sir William in 1758. A violinist, Sir William and his first wife shared a passion for music. Leopold Mozart wrote on 18 May 1770 that 'She played the clavier with unusual feeling'.[171] The elder Mozart's sympathetic observations were shared by many other musicians and artists who visited the Palazzo Sessa where they lived in Naples. Hamilton, who loved his first wife deeply, commissioned a superb portrait of himself together with his wife Catherine, playing a small harpsichord.[172] Painted by the Scottish portraitist David Allan (1744-1796), the work came into public hands when it was auctioned at Sotheby's in 2006.[173] Hamilton was Ambassador to Naples from 1764 to 1800, and in July 1769 he visited Valletta and sent a dispatch from Messina, addressed to Viscount Weymouth describing Malta, Grand Master Pinto and an assesment of the island and its industries and armaments.[174] Hamilton was witness to many of the tumultuous events in the Kingdom, and also, within his own household.

[170] Acton. According to David Constantine, Catherine Hamilton (née Barlow) was born in 1738 and died 25 August 1782. David Constantine, *Fields of Fire - A Life of Sir William Hamilton* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001)
[171] Anderson, *Mozart's Letters*, Letter 92. Leopold Mozart to his wife. Naples 19 May 1770. Lady Hamilton played on a Tschudi harpsichord from London.
[172] The Palazzo is situated above the Bay of Naples, commanding a magnificent view. The Roman scenic master, and 'Court Painter' to King Ferdinand I of Naples and Two Sicilies, Giovanni Battista Lusieri (1755-1821), painted the view of the port of Naples from the Palazzo.
[173] Sotheby's Auction, London 7 June 2006. Lot 159. The price realised was GBP 153,600.
[174] British Museum, Egerton 2635, MSS. 13091, f. 86 *et seq.* See *Melita Historica VI/I.*

Sonata III

Opera III - Dedicated to Lady Hamilton.

Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi
Edited by Richard Divall



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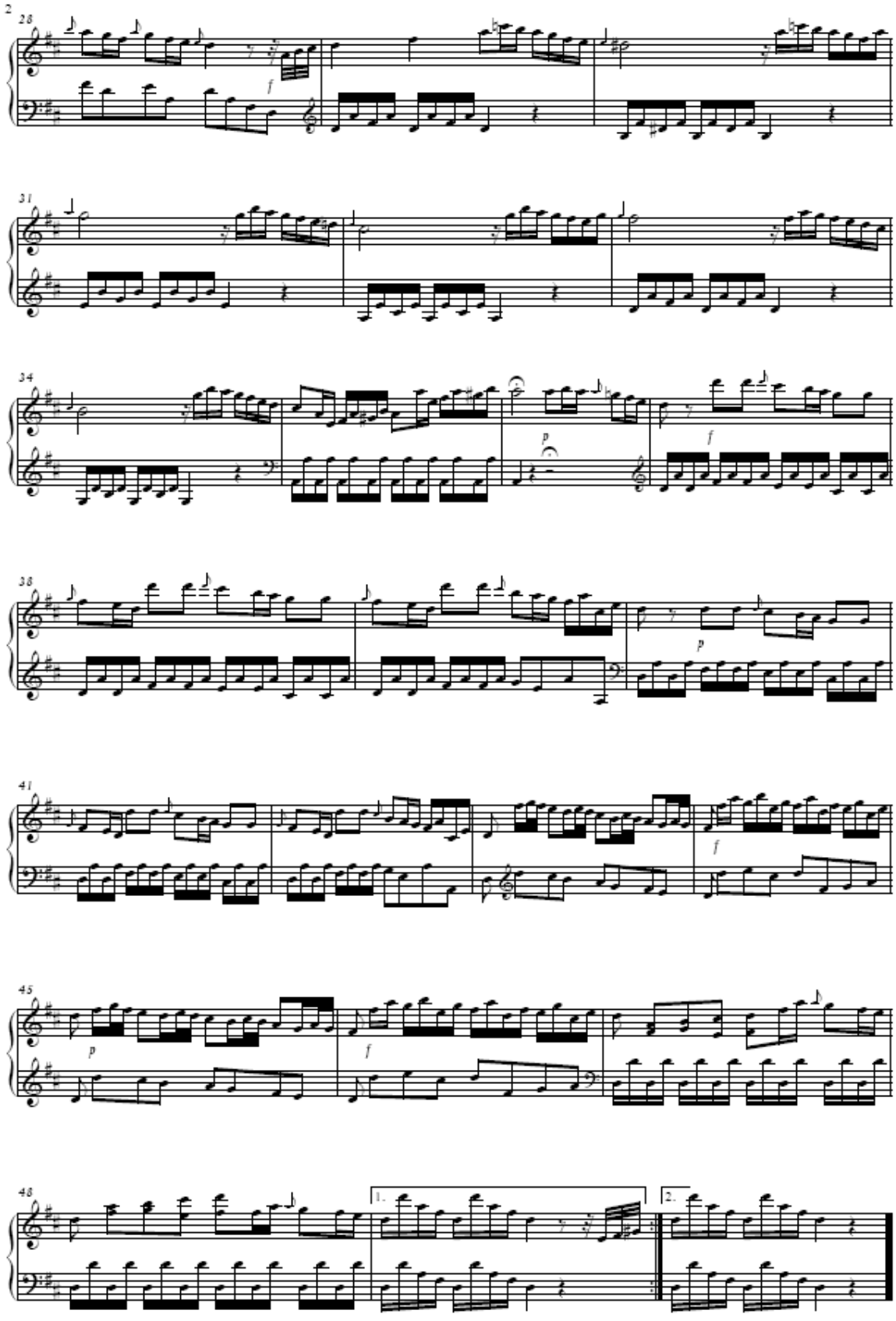
2
28
f
31
34
p
f
38
p
41
f
45
p
f
48
1.
2.

7.

Isouard - His First Operas.

I will discuss Isouard's first one act opera or stage work, *Casaciello* in section nine, where I focus on his return to Malta from France. But in 1794 Isouard secured two commissions – the first, to compose an *opera buffa, L'avviso ai maritati* for the Pergola Theatre in Florence, and second, from Livorno (Leghorn) for an *opera seria, Artaserse*.[175] The *opera buffa* was set to a libretto by Francesco Gonella De Ferrari, the Italian librettist who died in 1812. This was the first opera by Isouard to be presented away from his homeland, and a further season was given in the same year in Lisbon, followed by one in Bologna in autumn 1795. Another staging was given in Germany on 31 January 1795, at the Kleines Kurfürstliches Theater in Dresden. Complete scores of this work are recorded as being held in both Florence and Bologna.[176] Recently a full set of performing parts and a two volume set of scores have been located in Dresden.[177] There is currently no RISM entry on the location of the composer's manuscript of this opera. The date of the Florence premiere is only listed on the RISM catalogue entry to the Dresden scores, as being 4 June 1794. The work is described on the title page of the Dresden ms as a *Dramma Giocoso*. The full performance details of *L'avviso*, as are known are listed in the appendix to this thesis, entitled, *A Catalogue of Isouard's Operas*. The printed libretto for the Florence season survives in the Archivio Musica di Bologna, which gives a detailed cast list of the soloists, the principal orchestral players, ballet dancers and also the scenic designers, who were so important in ballet and opera of the time.

The introduction for his student Isouard, to compose this opera for Florence, could have been suggested to the theatre impresario by Guglielmi himself. Isouard's first work for Italy was a considerable success, and additional seasons of the piece were quickly mounted in Lisbon, Bologna, Turin and Dresden. These were followed by performances in 1795 and

[175] *L'avviso ai maritati*, or 'Advice for husbands'.
[176] Florence: Conservatorio di Musica Luigi Cherubini, I-Fc, and Bologna: Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, I-Bc.
[177] Dresden: Sachsiches Landesbibliothek (D-Ds/Mus, 4323-F-506); RISM ID No. 270001638.

1796 in Madrid, with a repeat season in Lisbon in the same year.[178] On 18 August 1798, the work was premiered at the Teatro Publico in the city of Lucca, immediately before the occupation of that Republic by French military forces.[179] The Teatro Castiglioncelli in Lucca had a good working relationship with Guglielmi, and again it was possibly his influence that secured this season of Isouard's opera.[180]

Francesco Gonella De Ferrari was a well-known librettist, who structured the scenario and text for the opera *Lodoiska* which had been previously set by Luigi Cherubini for Paris in 1791. De Ferrari had refashioned this successful libretto, from French into Italian for Giovanni Simone Mayr in 1796, and also in 1797 where it was staged at the Teatro la Fenice in Venice.[181] He was extremely active in the decade of the 1790's and wrote the libretto for Marcos Antônio Portugal's *opera seria, Il Ritorno di Serse*, premiered in 1797 at the San Benedetto in Venice, and also *Rinaldo e Armida*, composed by Giuseppe Mosca in 1799 for the Pergola Theatre in Florence. As far as I can ascertain, *L'avviso ai maritati* was first set to music in 1780 by Cimarosa, and premiered in Naples at the Teatro San Giovanni dei Fiorentini.

The cast for the premiere of Isouard's work, one placed under the protection of Ferdinand III, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, was a fine one, of singer/actors. Four of the soloists, Anna Benini, Vincenzo Aliprando, Fausto Borselli and Lorenzo Cipriani were all experienced performers and most had sung seasons in London.[182] Earl Cowper makes mention of several of them in his diaries when visiting Florence.[183]

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[178] Almannaco di Gherardo Casaglia.

[179] Ravenni, Gabriella Biagi. "The French Occupation of Lucca", *Music in the French Revolution* (Cambridge, CUP, 1992): p. 285. A printed libretto of this season is in *I.Lg* Biblioteca Statale, Lucca.

[180] The Teatro Castiglioncelli is still in Lucca to this day.

[181] Taddeo Weil, *I Teatri Musicali Veneziani del Settecento* (Bologna: Arnaldo Forni, 1978), 469 & 478.

[182] The soprano Anna Benini (date of birth and death are unknown), had an early singing career from 1771 in Venice, where she performed in operas of Bertoni and Manfredini. Her career took her to Naples where she sang with the legendary buffo bass, Antonio Casaccia, whose family of singers sang in and may have inspired Isouard's first opera *Casacciello, perseguitato da un mago* of 1793. She was engaged in the Haymarket seasons on 1786-87 where she performed with Nancy (Anna) Storace, who later sang the role of Susannah in the premiere of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. Benini's following career took place in Padua, Venice and later in Poland, and by the time of her singing in Isouard's opera, she was an acknowledged and experienced opera singer of talent. Her final years were spent in Paris. In London, Lord Charles Spencer remarked in his diary for 27 May 1787 that: 'The new woman (Signora Benini) has a pretty voice but not enough for that theatre'. In Vienna, the impresario Giovanni Andrea Gallini had sacked Benini in favour of the younger Storace, and this would appear to have been a planned manoeuvre on the part of this wily theatre manager. The bass, Fausto

Isouard's first two Italian operas had excellent and experienced casts of singers and the composer was doubly fortunate in that he worked with professional singer's right from the beginning of his career as a composer. His exposure to the roster of singers at St John's in Valletta meant that he worked with artists with superior singing techniques, and who were musically proficient and experienced in the area of sacred music. The casts of both *L'avviso* and *Artaserse* contained experts in their fields, either as singers of comic opera, or of *opera seria*.

Examination of the full score of *L'avviso,* which is held in Dresden, reveals that Isouard made no real self-borrowings from his previous sacred music, for use either in this opera, or vice versa. There are only three relative similarities in sections of the work, and they are the clarinet solo in the first act aria for the *Contessa*, which is reminiscent of other solo woodwind obbligatos in his sacred music, and the opening of the second act finale of the opera, which resembles the opening orchestral statement of the motet *Diffusa est Gratia.* There is also a short passage of eight bars that appears in the overture of this opera, which also occurs in the Malta *Sinfonia*.[184] Despite this lack of self-borrowings, the manuscript tells us many things of Isouard's compositional style and also his ease in writing for comic opera,

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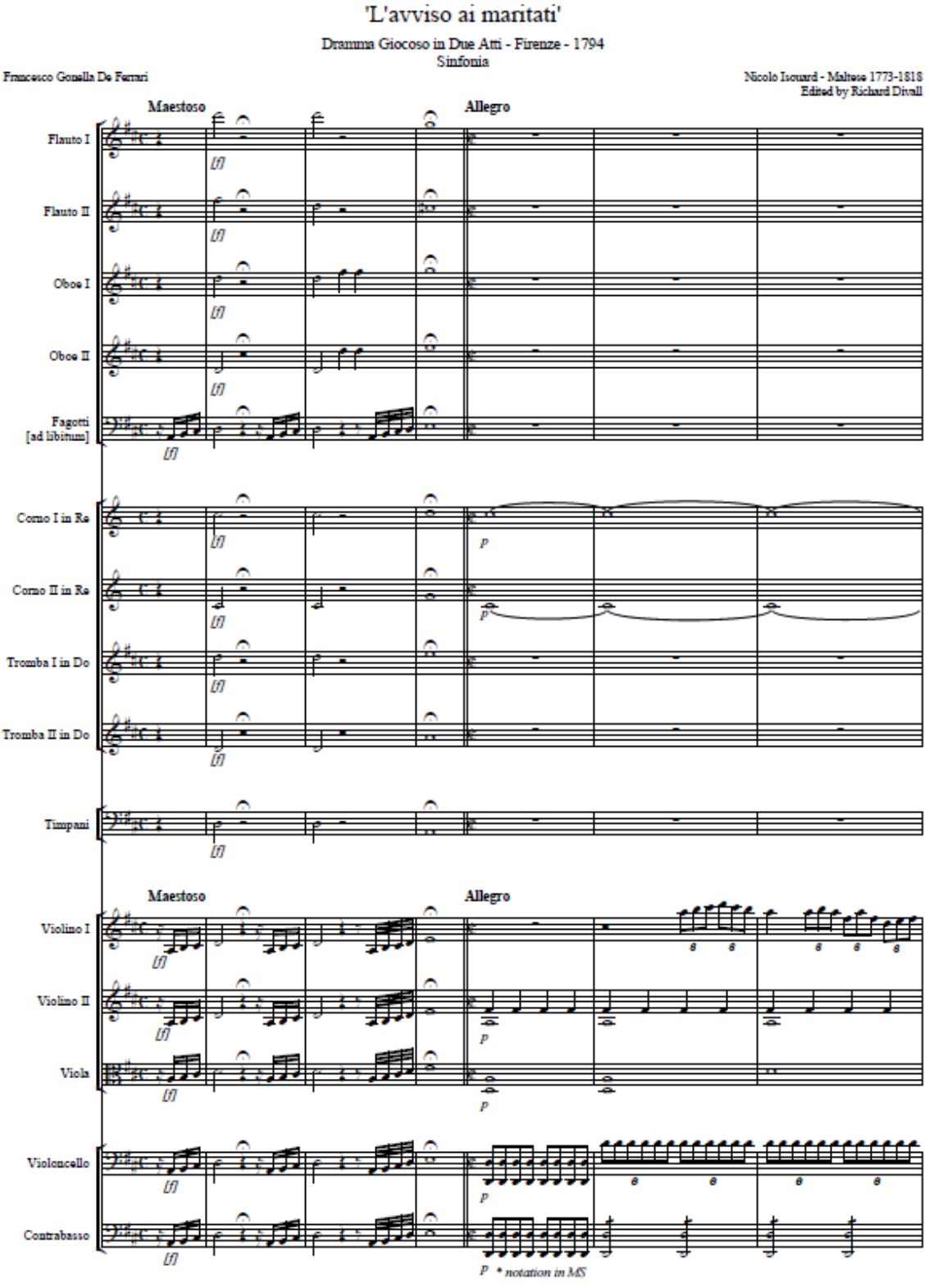
Borselli, husband of the soprano Elisabetta Borselli, appeared with his wife in Lord Cowper's favourite group of singers, in Gazzaniga's *La vendemmia* in 1788-90 seasons in London. In the same cast was the famous Francesco Benucci who had created the role of Figaro in Mozart's opera of the same name. Borselli had a career that spanned toward 30 years and specialised in *opera buffa*. He is first mentioned as singing in Milan in 1779 and the final appearance that we can trace is in Livorno in 1805. He appeared in many operas by Sarti, Salieri, Cimarosa, and sang in Paisiello's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Venice in 1787. The tenor, Vincenzo Alipandi is first mentioned in 1793, performing in Giuseppe Sarti's comic opera *I finti eredi* in Cremona. Sarti, who had worked in St Petersburg for the Russian Empress Catherine II, had an enviable career throughout Europe. His music was satirised in the act two finale of Mozart's *Don Giovanni.* In the season of Isouard's opera in Florence he was obviously a young and emerging singer. He appeared in many opera houses throughout Italy and in 1807 sang the role of Fernando in the premiere season of Mozart's *Così fan tute* at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. The second bass in the cast, Lorenzo Cipriani first appeared in 1782 and he also specialised in roles in comic operas, singing in works by Cimarosa and Pasquale Anfossi. His first known appearances were in Venice in 1785 when he sang in two operas by Guglielmi, *La Quakera spiritosa* and *L'impostore punito*. He had a long career, and the last record of his singing in opera is in 1819 in Florence, in Guglielmi's *Paulo e Virginia*. Filippo Senesi may have made his debut in the Isouard opera, for there is no mention of his appearing on the Italian stage before the 1794 staging of Isouard's *L'avviso*. From 1801 until 1810 he was resident in Portugal where he sang for the Royal Opera in Lisbon. He was a versatile artist, and is mentioned as singing in *opera buffa, opera seria* and oratorio. The soprano who sang the role of Eugenia, Marianna Moltz also had a career in opera buffa, and first appeared singing in three operas in Venice in 1779, including one by the Naples based Josef Schuster (*Il Bon Ton*), and Pasquale Anfossi's *Azor, Re di Kiginga*. Maria Veccelli, who sang the role of Dorina is only known from a couple of other sources, and that is her performing in Guglielmi's comic opera *La bella pescatrice*, which was staged in Parma in 1791, and in Cimarosa's *Le Trame deluse* in Mantua in 1790.

[183] Elizabeth Gibson, 'Earl Cowper in Florence and his correspondence with the Italian Opera in London', *Music and Letters,* 68, no. 3 (1987): 235-252.

[184] This similarity is discussed in Chapter Three.

as compared to his sacred music. This comic opera in two acts consists of an overture and seventeen distinct movements for voices – arias, duets, trios, a quintet and two finales. There is no doubt that the composer reveals himself at ease in composing the sections of *secco recitativo* and *recitativo accompagnato*, all of which are well written throughout the opera. The accompanied recitatives are written both for strings, and also for full orchestra. His grasp of Italian language in setting *secco recitativo* is very fine, and the music is carefully written to the text. There is an economy in his writing for woodwinds in the arias, but in the finales, the orchestration is often quite full, especially in the woodwind section. Isouard uses the clarinet extensively as a solo obbligato instrument throughout the opera, and especially so in the *Contessa's* act two aria *Nò, nò, che à si crude pene*. Another feature is how often he utilises divided violas, and in his humorous setting of rapid and repeated text, often to single words (*Oh! Ah! Nò!* etc.), in the comic ensembles and the two finales. Both of the finales are multi movement extended pieces, and that ending act one is particularly fine. One aria exists elsewhere in a single manuscript, and deservedly so - the aria for the *Contessa* in act two, *Hò perduto il mio contento*, which has an extended obbligato for solo violin and solo violoncello. In this opera Isouard also utilises the orchestral string terms *sul ponticello* and *battute*, which he also uses in his surviving 'Malta *Sinfonia*' which is in the edition accompanying this thesis.[185] The following extract of the opening of the overture/sinfonia of *L'avviso* demonstrates an assured confidence in Isouard's operatic orchestral writing.

[185] Several self-borrowings appear from the Malta *Sinfonia*, and also in the duet *Senza mirarmi in volto* from his *Artaserse*. His assured lyric and comic writing for the theatre in *L'avviso* demonstrate how much Isouard's talent lay in operatic composition.



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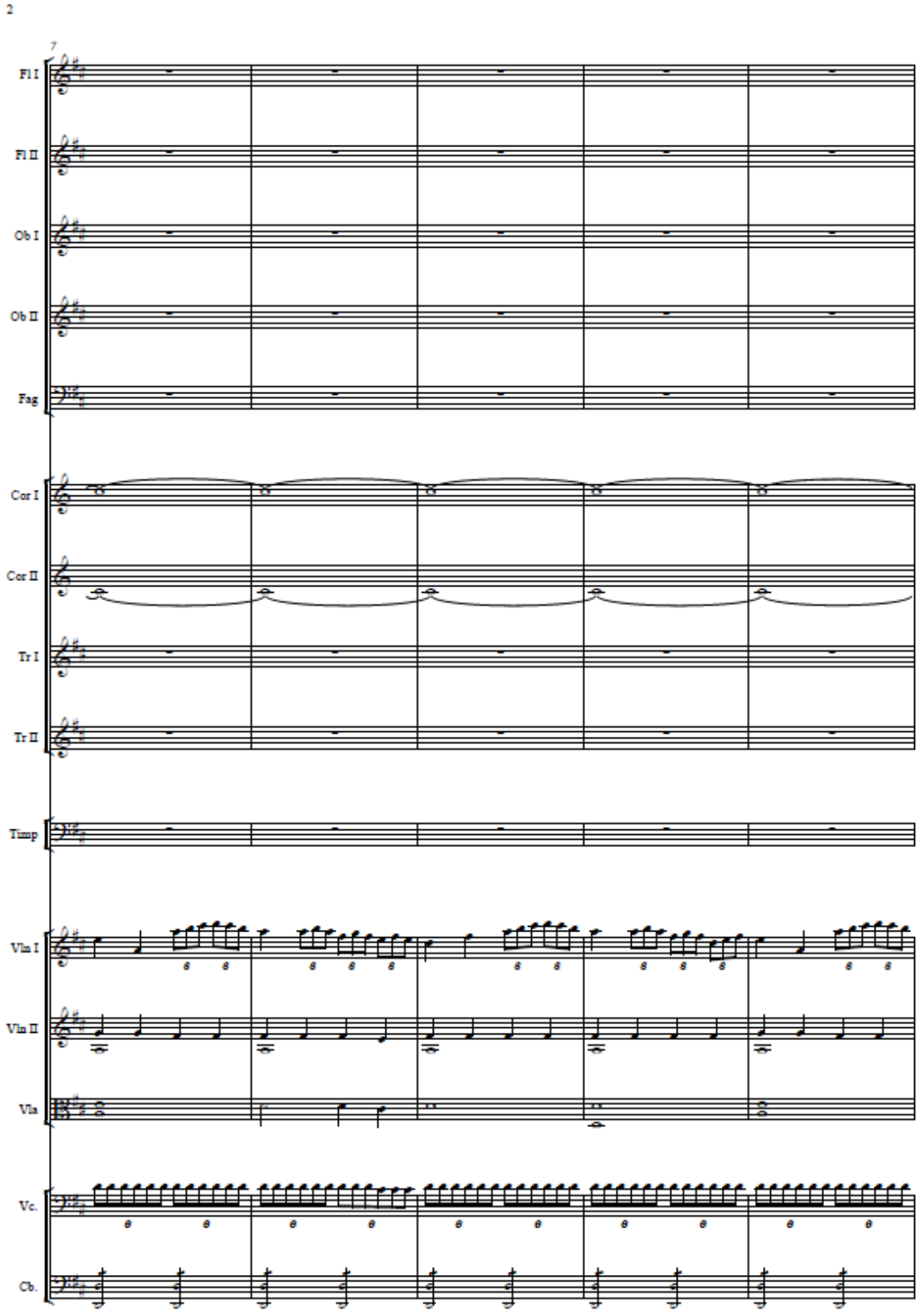
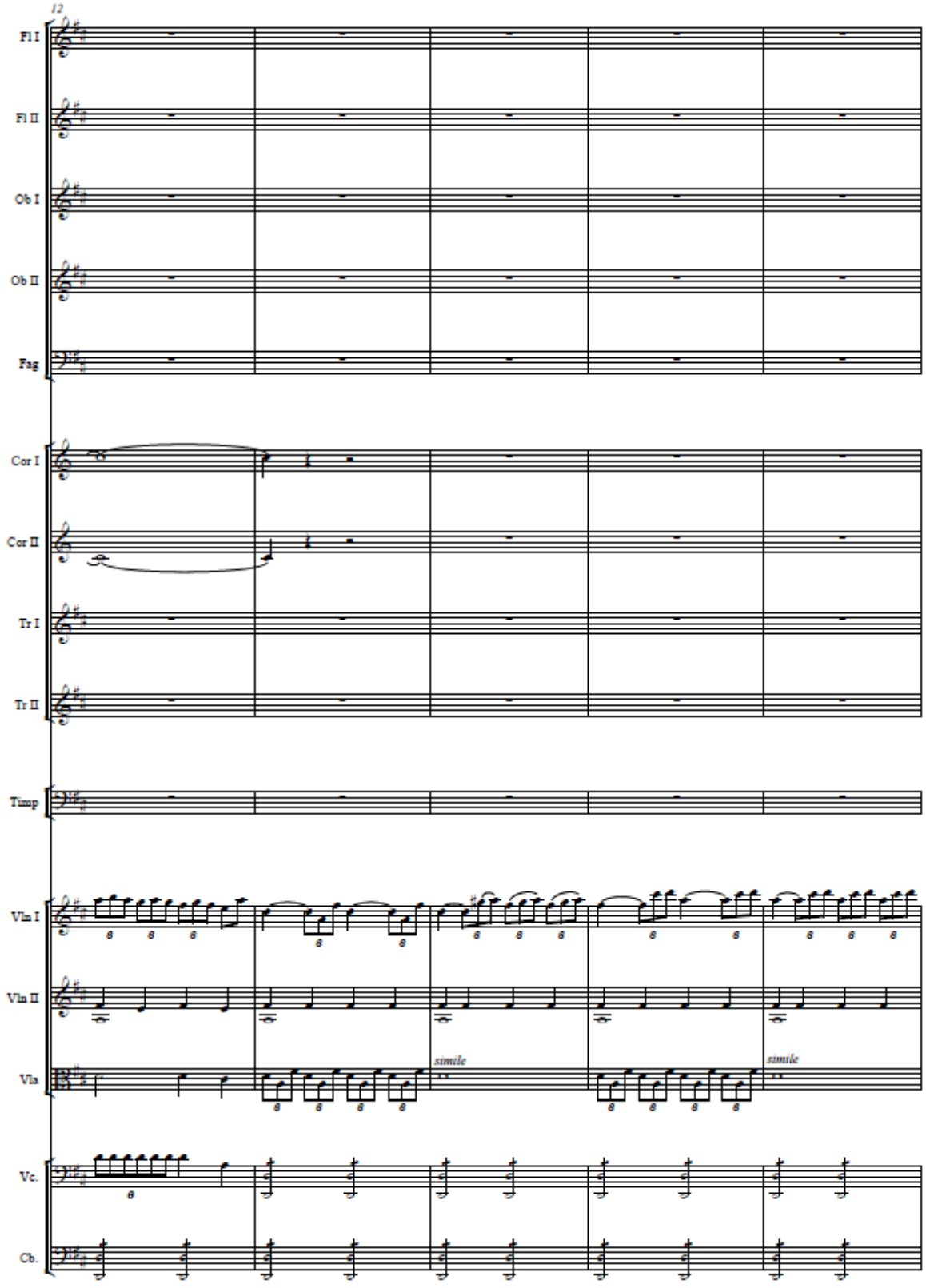
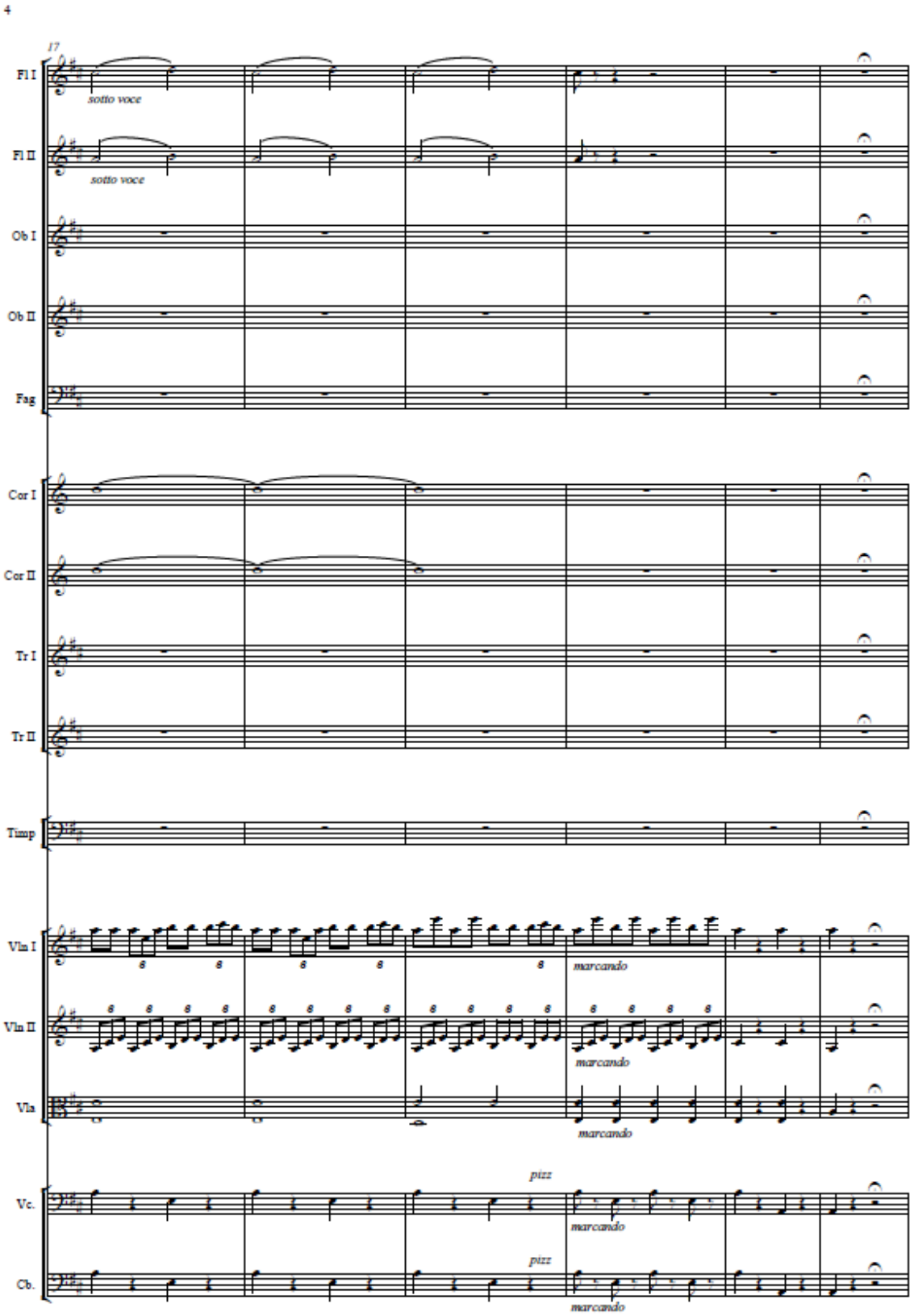
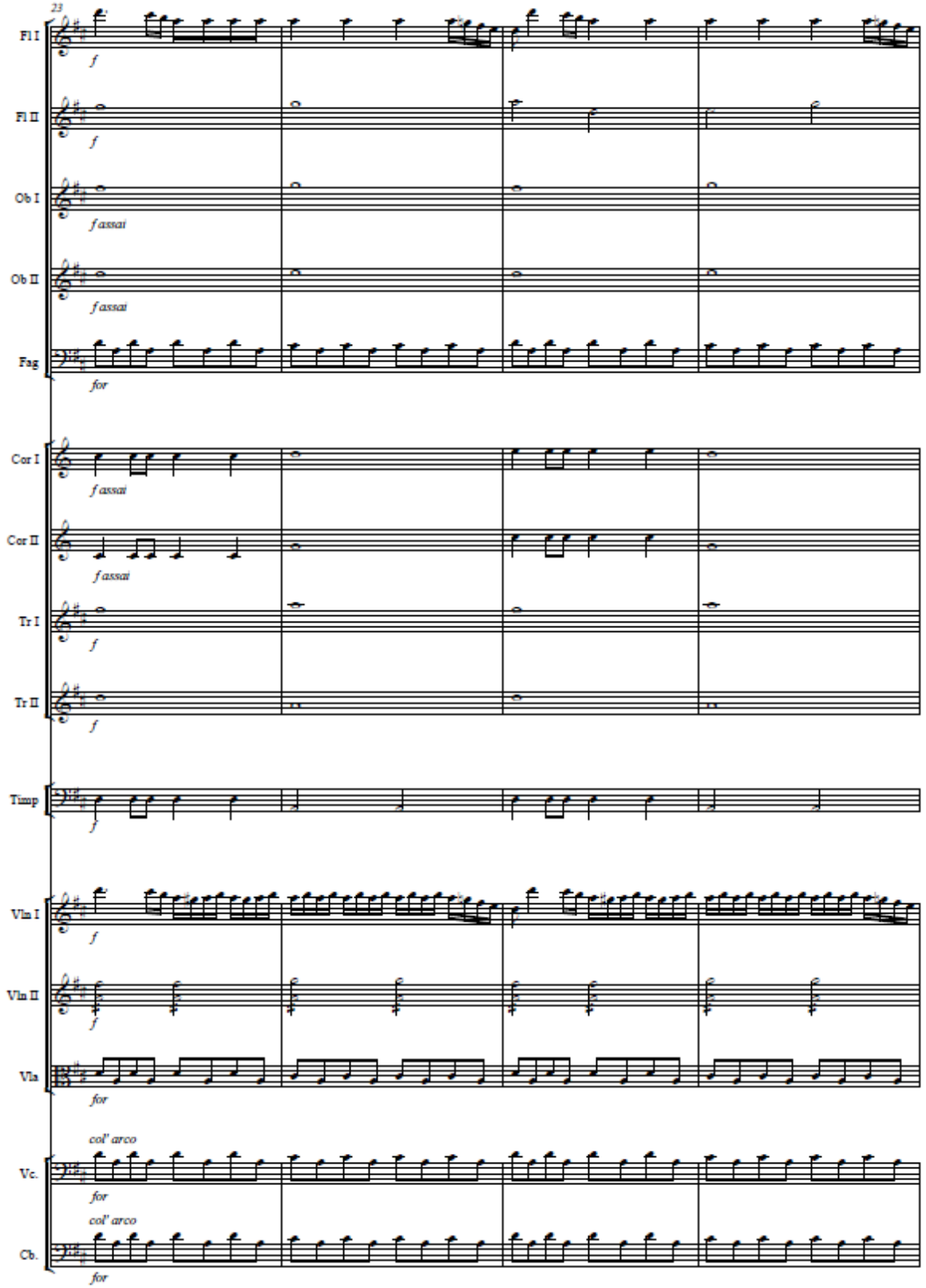
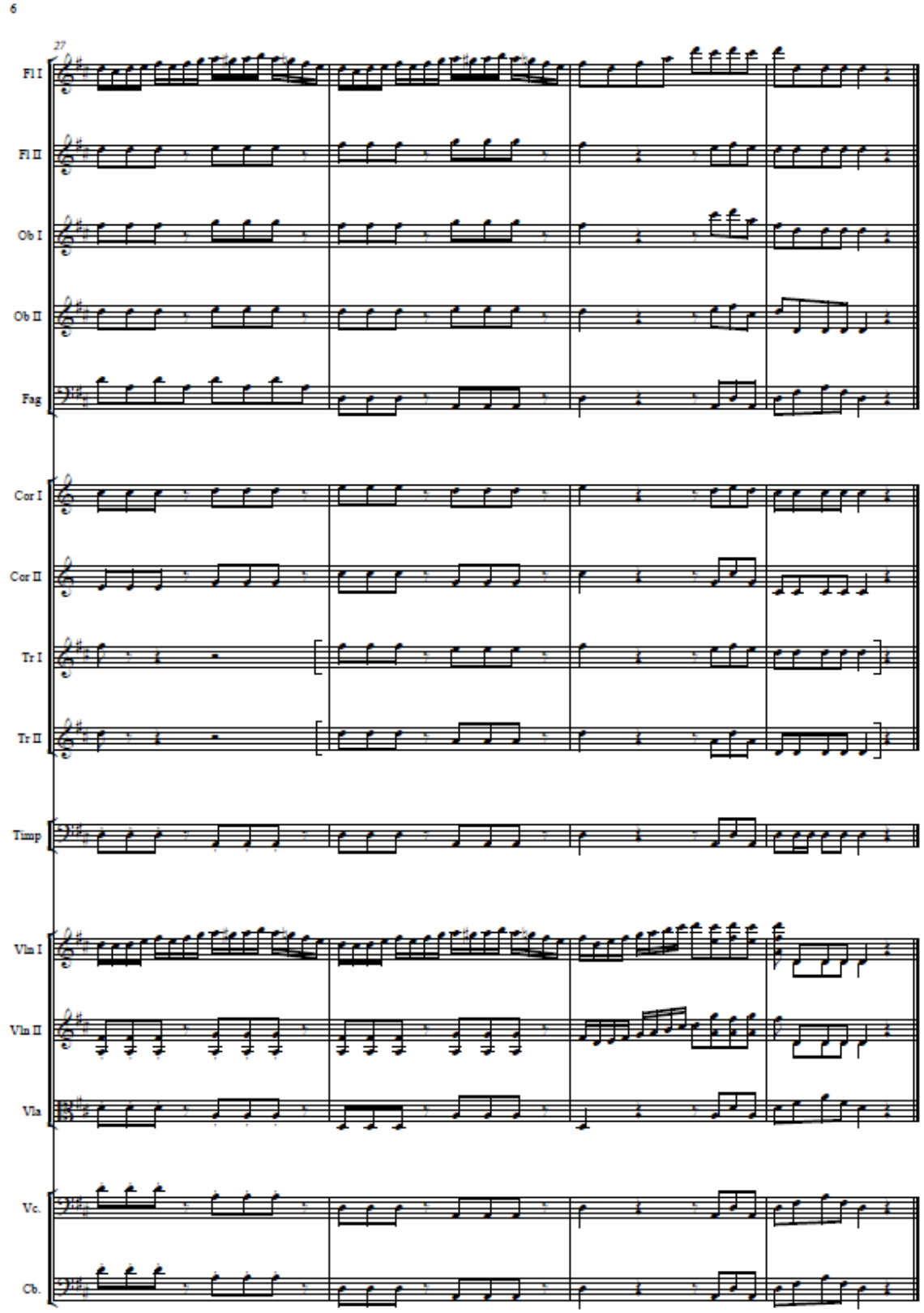

2
7
Fl I
Fl II
Ob I
Ob II
Fag
Cor I
Cor II
Tr I
Tr II
Timp
Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Vc.
Cb.


12
Fl I
Fl II
Ob I
Ob II
Fag
Cor I
Cor II
Tr I
Tr II
Timp
Vln I
Vln II
Vla
simile
simile
Vc.
Cb.


4
17
Fl I
sotto voce
Fl II
sotto voce
Ob I
Ob II
Fag
Cor I
Cor II
Tr I
Tr II
Timp
Vln I
marcando
Vln II
marcando
Vla
marcando
pizz
Vc.
marcando
pizz
Cb.
marcando


23
Fl I
Fl II
Ob I
Ob II
Fag
Cor I
Cor II
Tr I
Tr II
Timp
Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Vc.
Cb.
f
f assai
for
col' arco


6
27
Fl I
Fl II
Ob I
Ob II
Fag
Cor I
Cor II
Tr I
Tr II
Timp
Vln I
Vln II
Vla
Vc.
Cb.

Isouard's second opera *Artaserse*, set to the libretto of Pietro Metastasio was premiered in the Teatro degli Avvolatori in Livorno on 30 August 1794. The cast was an experienced one, and included such singers as:

Artaserse – Salvatore Tiezzi, sopranist.
Arbace/Meglacle - Andrea Martini (Senesino), sopranist.[186]
Mandane – Angiola Perini, soprano.
Semira – Maria Anna Cavalli, soprano.
Artabano – Gustavo Lazzarini, tenor.[187]
Megabise – Giovanni Bendazzi, bass.

At the time, Livorno was the main port for the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the theatre was an important one for composers and singers. Inaugurated in 1782 with the premiere of the Tuscan born Luigi Cherubini's *opera seria, Adriano in Siria*, the theatre had a long and important history in the culture of this port.[188] The city had maritime and commercial ties with the Order, and was also the naval base for the Tuscan navy, and the ships of the Order of San Stefano, established by the Grand Dukes of Tuscany in 1561 in imitation of the Order of Malta. In Livorno, in the same year as *Artaserse*, Nicolo Zingarelli's work *Quinto Fabio* was also given its premiere, and the cast included some of the singers who performed in

[186] Andrea Martini 1761-1819. Not to be confused with the earlier castrato Francesco Bernardi (1686-1758), also called Senesino after the place of his birth, Siena. Born in 1761 Andrea appeared in the two carnival seasons in Venice in 1789-90. He sang in operas by both Guglielmi and Pasquale Anfossi. Martini had a career that began in 1781, in an intermezzo in two acts by Domenico Cimarosa, staged in the Teatro Valle in Rome in 1781. He was particularly active in Naples in the mid 1780's where he sang in opera seria by Giacomo Tritto (Armida abbandonata), Arsace and Rinaldi by Guglielmi, and *Montezume* by Josef Myslivecek. From 1790 he performed regularly in Livorno, and also in the Court Theatre in Turin. After an active career his final season on the stage is possibly in 1803 in *Adria consolata*, a *festa teatrale* by Ferdinando Bertoni. After the season in Livorno, Martini performed in Sienna, Milan and Rome in 1797.

[187] Gustavo Lazzarini, also known as Guido Lazzarini was born around 1765. After his appearance in the Isouard opera, he performed regularly at La Scala in Milan until 1798. His debut was in 1789 in Paisiello's well known work *Nina o sia La pazza del amore*. He made his premiere at La Scala, Milan in Zingarelli's *Artaserse* in 1793, followed by the opera seria *Demofoonte* by Antônio Portugal. As a singer he was well known to Guglielmi and sang in several of his operas, which were in great vogue in Italy at the time. He performed regularly in opera in Venice and Lisbon until his debut in Paris in 1801, in Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto*. Lazzarini's career took him throughout Europe and even to Poland. In 1801 he had settled in Paris and was a well known performer in Italian repertoire, in such as operas by Cimarosa. The bass, Giovanni Bendazzi had a long career, specialising in both *opera seria*, but especially in *opera buffa*. He was a regular in opera houses in both Naples and Venice, and his final operatic appearance was in 1811, at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples, in Gaspare Spontini's opera *La Vestale*. The cast included the later famous, Isabella Colbran.

[188] Marie Briquet/David Charlton, 'Isouard, Nicolas', *The New Grove* lists this premiere has having taken place in the Teatro degli Armeni in Livorno. Luigi Cherubini collaborated with Isouard and Boieldieu on the comic pasticcio *Bayard à Mézières* (Opéra-Comique 12 February 1814).

Isouard's *Artaserse*, including the castrato Salvatore Tiezzi and the soprano Anna Maria Cavalli.[189]

The opera *Artaserse* was to be omnipresent in Maltese operatic literature and its author, the Abate Pietro Metastasio was perhaps the most significant literary influence in opera in the eighteenth century. Born Pietro Trapassi on 6 January 1698, the son of a humble grocer, he was a gifted *improvvisatore*, and one with a fine and attractive voice. Struck by his talent, Gian Vincenzo Gravina, the philosopher and Professor of Law at the La Sapienza adopted the young poet, changing his surname to the more elegant Metastasio.[190] Gravina died, leaving the young Metastasio his heir, and the young poet promptly devoted himself to writing sonnets and secular cantatas. His early speciality was nuptial texts, and soon he had become the essential poet for cantatas composed for royal weddings and family anniversaries. This brought him to the attention of the Hapsburg dynasty in Vienna, and in 1729 he was appointed imperial poet laureate at the Hofburg, in succession to Apostolo Zeno.[191] His *opera seria* were set to music by every Italian composer of note in that period, and his libretti were still being set to music as late as the 1830's by composers including Rossini and Meyerbeer. Hasse's *Artaserse* was the first opera to be staged at the Manoel Theatre, in Valletta in 1735, and that same text was also set by the Maltese composers Girolamo Abos (Venice 1746), and Giuseppe Arena (Turin 1741). Rousseau described Metastasio as 'the only poet of the heart'.[192] Isouard's own opera received only one season of performances, and it significant that Isouard never attempted to stage the work during his time on Malta,

[189] Marie Briquet/David Charlton, 'Isouard, Nicolas', *The New Grove*. The castrato Salvatore Tiezzi's career began around 1781 when he is mentioned as performing in *L'Erifile* by Felice Allessandri in Padua. Tiezzi made his Venetian debut in Didone abbandonata in 1790, after having sung for some years in Rome, where his repertoire included *Le Morte di Giulio Cesare* of Gaetano Andreozzi (1790), and Guglielmi's *Gli equivoci nati* in 1787 at the Teatro Valle. Guglielmi's influence in this casting might be considered. The tenor Gustavo Lazzarini began his career in 1789 in Paisiello's well known work *Nina o sia La pazza del amore*. He made his premiere at La Scala, Milan in Zingarelli's *Artaserse* in 1793, followed by the opera seria *Demofoonte* by Antônio Portugal. He sang regularly in Venice and Lisbon until his premiere in Paris in 1801 in Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto*.

[190] Gian Vincenzo Gravina (1664-1718).

[191] Apostolo Zeno (1669-1750). Venetian aristocrat of Cretan descent, poet and librettist, Zeno was a major influence on operatic texts of the period. His literary style, condensing the time structures and the number of characters, as well as deleting any comic influences laid the ground-work for the works of his successor, Metastasio. He was a collaborator of the Italian playwright Scipione Maffei, whose five act tragedy *Merope* opened the Teatru Manoel on 19 January 1732. Written in 1713 and premiered in Modena in 1713, *Merope* was the finest Italian play of the eighteenth century and remained unrivalled until the emergence of the plays of Vittorio Alfieri. In this Maltese premiere the seven characters in the play were acted by knights of the Italian *Langue*. Xuereb, 4.

[192] Hanns Gross*, Rome in the Age of the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), p. 303.

especially when he was superintendent of the theatre there. There were changes made by the composer to Metastasio's libretto, and the duet *Senza mirarmi in volto,* for the characters Arbace and Artabano were substituted verses by another unknown poet. In this duet there are three bars of self-borrowing from the Malta *Sinfonia*, which suggests the possibility that that orchestra work from the Franciscan's Archive in Valletta may in fact be the overture of this *opera seria* or the earlier *L'avviso ai maritati.*[193]

Concerning Artaserse, his only *opera seria,* it is possible that Isouard viewed the work as being too old fashioned, and possibly out of sympathy with his political leanings. Even more so was the fact that the Maltese public preferred comic operas in the Italian style, rather than Metastasian *opera seria*. Despite the on-going success of his *L'avviso ai maritati*, the young composer decided to return to Malta and actively seek regular employment with the Order, as an organist, composer and possible *maestro di capella* in the Conventual Church of St John the Baptist.

[193] The same self-borrowing appears in *L'avviso ai maritati* in the accompanied recitative, rondo and allegro aria *Nò che à si crude pene* for the Countess in Act Two.

8.

Return to Malta, and Isouard in the Conventual Church of St John.

His studies at an end, Isouard had to seek musical employment and it was to his birthplace that he looked. Various authorities are certain that Isouard only returned to Malta from Naples only toward the end of 1794. This would have enabled him to be present, as was customary for a composer, for the premieres of both his *L'avviso ai maritati* in Florence and *Artaserse* in Livorno, the latter being premiered on 30 August in the same year. It is probable that Isouard sailed directly from Livorno to Malta, as there was regular shipping on that route.

At the time of Isouard's return, the *maestro di cappella* of the Conventual Church was Melchior, or Melchiore Sammartin, who had been appointed to the post on 1 December 1765.[194] There was one other long term resident composer and musician on Malta, the Neapolitan composer Vincenzo Anfossi. The future organist at the Conventual Church, Vincenzo was possibly the brother of the more famous Pasquale Anfossi (1727-1797). According to Anfossi himself, he was born in Naples around 1738, and his father's name was Domenico, and he is listed as having studied at the Conservatorio di Santa Maria di Loreto in that city.[195] Financially sponsored by several of the knights of the Order, an opera by Anfossi, *Nitteti*,[196] was presented at the Manoel Theatre in 1775.[197] The composer had been

[194] AOM 999, f. 23v. Melchiore Sammartin composed some secular works for the Order, one of them in 1768, a *Calendimaggio* Cantata*, Il Trionfo della Virtù*, to the text by the Doctor of Law, Claudio Mazzarelli. The following year he composed another untitled Serenata to a text by '*brillante Socio Colombario'*. Could this pseudonym allude to the knight and patron of Prota, Carafa, the Prince of Columbrano? Sammartin's final cantata, by the same anonymous authors was for the *festa* of 1770, set to the Punic friendly text of *Didone in Malta*. Miceli, 34. I do not know of any surviving compositions by Sammartin. (Sometimes spelled Sammartino). The surname of Sammartin appears in the will dated 2 March 1732 of a servant-at-arms, Joseph Genest, who declared himself to be a debtor to 'the musician Sammartin'. Carmen Depasquale, 'French Knights and Maltese inhabitants in the XVIII Century', *Storja* (2003-2004): 45-61.

[195] Simon Mercieca, 'Italian Opera Singers in Malta in the middle of the eighteenth century', *Treasures of Malta*, 49 (2010): 76.

[196] An opera of the same name had been composed by Pasquale Anfossi and premiered in the Teatro San Carlo, Naples on 13 August 1771. The libretto, written by Metastasio in 1756, was first set by the composer Nicola Conforto. (The title is occasionally, incorrectly spelled as *Nitetti*).

[197] Private correspondence with Joseph Vella Bondin. It is likely that Anfossi was occasionally the *maestro di capella* of the Manoel Theatre. Mercieca, 80, n. 23.

music director to the Grand Magistral court for some years.[198] Before his return to Malta on 10 November 1791, both Isouard and Anfossi jointly petitioned Grand Master de Rohan to receive their consideration as the future organist and substitute organist, when the positions should become available.[199] This was a traditional practice, and a similar petition had been made by Giuseppe Arena to Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena in March 1724.[200] Anfossi and Isouard's petition was approved by the Grand Master, and this meant that both musicians had cause to hope for eventual permanent employment with the Order.[201] Anfossi's compositional style is modern for the period, and this is clearly seen in his Sinfonia in D major, entitled 'Concerto No. 6' which is held in a set of orchestral parts in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.[202] In three movements, the orchestration is assured and the writing is in the serious Neapolitan style of Josef Schuster. Although musically conservative in some respects, it is more orchestrally imaginative than the writing of Zerafa and Azopardi. I mention this, because it is obvious that the older Anfossi could have been an influence on the younger Isouard. A comparison of their sacred works is illuminating. Although his orchestral writing in the concerto is fine, the few sacred works that I have viewed by Anfossi are conservative and pedestrian.[203] Although Anfossi was the palace *maestro di cappella* to

[198] Vincenzo Anfossi had made a generous contribution to musical life on Malta. Apart from his career at St John's he composed several secular works on Malta. Cited in Miceli, these include his *Prologo* - a *Serenata* for two voices first performed on 18 January 1764, to celebrate the twenty-third anniversary of the election of Grand Master Pinto. His other secular works include a dramatic oratorio *Batto, Re di Malta* (January 1767), the *festa teatrale, Ulisse in Faecia* (1768), *Il Trionfo di Minerva* (1769), *L'Amore Costante d'Acis e Galatea* (1770), a *Serenata* (1774) in honour of Grand Master Ximenes, and finally his opera *Nitteti*. Miceli cites the latter work as having been performed in 1775 and this is confirmed on the cover of the libretto book of the opera, printed on Malta in 1774. The opera is dedicated to Grand Master Francesco Ximenez de Texada. After the latter work, no more records are found of major secular compositions of Anfossi on Malta. He is mentioned as having taught counterpoint to the Maltese composer Emanuele Nani (1769-1860), and Vella Bondin and Simon Mercieca cite him as being the *maestro di capella* of San Lorenzo in the Birgu (Vittoriosa). Several sacred works survive including an *Ecce crucem Domini,* for chorus and orchestra, which had previously been owned by Isouard (F-Pn; Mus. Ms. 1977). A *Nisi Dominus* is in the private music collection of G B Gauci on Gozo.

[199] AOM, Arch. 1196 (*Suppliche*), 57-8.

[200] Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena was elected in 1722 and died in 1736. Joseph Vella Bondin, 'Giuseppe Arena', In *Melitensium Amor, Festscrift in honour of Dun Gwann Azzopardi* (Malta: Gutenberg Press, 2002), 392-3.

[201] AOM, Arch. 660 (*Registro dei Decreti della Camera del Tesoro*, 1789 – 1793).

[202] F-Pn; Mus. Ms. L. 1711. FRBNF 39606524 (Richelieu – Musique – magasin de la Réserve MS – 17111.) Score 17f. 10 parts. Described as '*Concerto no. 6'*. It is scored for strings, 2 oboes and 2 *Corni da Caccia* in D. The sinfonia has been made into a modern edition by Richard Divall.

[203] These include the *Quattro Responsorii* (catalogued as four motets but actually five). The fifth, a Libera Me from the Requiem Mass, in D minor is the most interesting (F-Pn; Ms 1986. FRBNF 39606515). One aria, *Vanne del prence eletto*, held in Paris could be an excerpt from a cantata, composed for the election of a Grand Master: (F-Pn; Ms 1980. FRBNF 39606526).

three Grand Masters - Pinto, Ximines and de Rohan, no chamber instrumental works by him are known to have survived.

Isouard's return by late 1794 is borne out by several documents, especially a petition from Isouard to Grand Master de Rohan, dated 22 November 1794, asking for preferment to the succession to the position of *maestro di cappella* of the Conventual Church. [204] Over many years de Rohan had demonstrated his affection, and a desire to assist the young Isouard. He was certainly aware of his emerging talent as a composer for the Order. In return, Isouard would not be backward in securing favourable patronage and a salaried position from the Grand Master. Accordingly de Rohan granted this request, and on the same day.[205]

As previously noted, due to the illness of the organist Don Isidoro Schembri in 1791, both Vincenzo Anfossi and Isouard submitted petitions, and on the dismissal of the acting organist of St John's, Anfossi was appointed to that position. I have managed to locate a number of sacred works by Anfossi, and the majority of them are held in the Bibliothéque Nationale. These include various *pezzi staccati* of the Mass, including two *Kyrie's*, and three *Gloria's*, as well as a setting of the *Officium Defunctorum*, and a miniature *Ave maris stella*.[206] There is also a setting of the Mass for the five soloist/choral lines, in the Neapolitan style, as in Isouard's *Te Deum* of 1791. On the death of the organist Anfossi on 5 January 1796, Isouard was appointed to that post at St John's. In addition to his small emolument of 100 *scudi*, as a *Donat* of the Order, Isouard was given an annual salary of 252 *scudi*.[207] He only served as organist for four years, two of them under the French occupation, and was never to be appointed *maestro di cappella* of St John's. There are a couple of documents concerning Isouard and his activities in St John's that have survived and these are published in *Azzopardi*.

[204] AOM. Arch. 6524C. F, 57 (olim 19).
[205] Vella Bondin, *Isouard Concert Programme* (Valletta: APS Bank. St John's Cathedral, Valletta, 2011), 6.
[206] Most of these works are held in the Bibliothèque Nationale, although some manuscripts are found in Poland and Dubrovnik (*Omni die dic Mariae* and *Un occhiatina tenera*). The listing of Vincenzo Anfossi's Paris manuscripts can be found on RISM (http://www.rism.info/en/).
[207] NLM, Arch. 1001, 20.

The music establishment of the Conventual Church at the time is recorded in four manuscripts from the Archives of The Order of St John.[208] Entitled *Salariati*, the names and duties of the players and singers are recorded in a double register. At the fall of Malta to the French, the number of musicians on the salaried staff was twenty one, including eight singers and the remainder instrumentalists, two organists including Isouard, and Sammartin the *maestro di cappella*. [209] In 1795, the list had included that of a serpent player (Pietro Caruana), but that instrument had been discontinued in the interim period.[210] As Isouard's and Azopardi's scores often call for pairs of horns and oboes, then possibly these and other instruments, including trumpets would have been brought in on a casual basis. Of interest is that Isouard also composed for a pair of clarinets (in the *Diffusa est gratia*), which are not mentioned in the *Salariati*.

The organ in the Conventual Church is worth some comment. Like most organs on Malta at the time, it was almost completely designed by Italian organ builders. The oldest pipe organ on Malta is a 'castrato' organ of Sicilian provenance and dating from the early seventeenth century. Originally housed in the Chapel of Auvergne, it was moved into the Oratory of St John's in 1665, and has recently been restored. The first main instruments were those possibly constructed by the Sicilian organ builder Santu Romano. In Isouard's time, the position of the double set of organ pipes was still in the same position, above both sides of the altar. The two ornate gilt organ cases date from 1664 when they were installed in the reign of Grand Master Nicolas Cotoner. During the eighteenth century the Turriglio family had had a century long connection with the organ at St John's, both as organ makers, tuners and performers. For many years Pietro Turriglio has been organist in the Conventual Church.[211] Another family of organ tuners and restorers, the Santucci family arrived from Palermo or Syracuse and on 19 September 1768, Pietro Santucci was commissioned to examine the organ at St John's, as it was obviously in some disrepair. It was decided by the Common Treasury of the Order to commission Santucci to build a new instrument, which

[208] AOM. Arch. 968, 889-1001 (Salariati 2).
[209] *Azzopardi,* 25.
[210] Vella Bondin, *Isouard Concert Programme,* 6.
[211] John De Bono, *Art and Artisans in St John's and other Churches in the Maltese Islands ca. 1650-1800* (Gudja, Malta: 2005), 393.

was installed by early 1770, at the cost of 800 *scudi*.[212] Muscat suggests that this was a 'rebuild of the old instrument'.[213] This single instrument proved so effective that another twin was ordered at the same price from the same maker. It is presumably this Santucci organ that was in the Conventual Church during Isouard's tenure.[214]

One unexpected feature in Isouard's sacred scores is the complete absence of any registration directions for the organ, other than the terms *organo chiuso* and *organo aperto*. Buono believes that the specifications of the organ at the time were as follows: *Principale I, Principale II, Voce umana, Ottava, XV, XIX, XXII, XXVI, XXIX, Flauto in ottava*, and Sicilian type pedals.[215] In a document of the time there is a mention of a *flauto traversiere* replacing a *flauto dolce*, and from the records of the time (about materials purchased), we know that Santucci must have added or replaced a *'contrabassi'* stop. A copy of a 19th century document describing the history of the organs at St John's says that Santucci rebuilt the organ there.[216] The current instrument is by Mascioni.[217] The second half of the eighteenth century on Malta was a period of considerable organ construction, and churches and chapels on Malta were furnished with instruments or smaller *organetti*, or castrato organs.

One item of interest in this period of Isouard's time on Malta, comes in a recent article written by the Maltese author Frans Said, which states that in 'French sources Isouard had married a Partenia Dimech in 1796', but that his marriage had been annulled.[218] However, it is clear from Vella Bondin that on 5 September 1796 Isouard had simply acted as a proxy for Rafael Pepi's marriage to Partenia Dimech.[219]

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[212] *Ibid.* 395.
[213] Correspondence with Hugo Agius Muscat, 6 June 2012.
[214] Another eighteenth century Santucci *ottavino* organ, namely that used by Michel' Angelo Vella, in the Oratory of the Cospicua Collegiate Church, has recently been restored by the Maltese organ builder, Robert Buhagiar in 2009. The restoration was sponsored by the APS Bank, Malta.
[215] Luciano Buono and Hugo Agius Muscat, *Old Organs in Malta and Gozo* (Malta: 1999), 252.
[216] Correspondence with Hugo Agius Muscat, 6 June 2012. Quoting this document verbatim: *(Santucci) aggiunse il piccolo controbancone con 8 bassi, tuono di 10, e tre mantici e stecca abolendi gli antichi che erano ad otre.* 'This note suggests that Santucci added eight 16' pedal pipes on a new chest (apart from replacing the three bellows)'.
[217] Hugo Agius Muscat, 'Old Organs in Malta and Gozo'. *Treasures of Malta*, (2000): Vol. 6, No. 2. 37-42.
[218] Frans Said, *Nicolò Isouard*.
[219] *Azzopardi, 22.* Archives of Porto Salvo. Register of Marriages for 1796, f. 527. Rafael or Rafaele Pepi was a future organist at St John's.

The French invasion of 1798 changed much for Isouard, and all foreign clergy and most of the knights were forced to leave Malta.[220] This deprived Isouard and the church musicians of much needed official and private patronage. Furthermore, during the long siege of Valletta by the allied forces, the life of the Conventual Church was becoming difficult, and Vaubois, the French governor had been encouraging all 'useless mouths' to depart. The remaining chaplains of St John's stated that they could no longer cope with such a precarious existence and lack of food. They left through the city walls of Valletta, and on 30 November 1799, the Office that had continued from the time of the Order's rule, was sung for the final time in the Conventual Church. It would only resume with the expulsion of the French, and the devolution of the Conventual Church of St John to the See of Malta. From that time onwards, the church would come under the musical direction of the Mdina Cathedral maestro, Francesco Azopardi, and his pupil, Pietro Paulo Bugeja.

[220] Some seventeen elderly knights who had lived most of their lives on Malta were allowed by the French to remain on Malta.

9.

Isouard and Opera on Malta.

Isouard's heart and talent lay in writing music for the stage. Fortuitously, his own experience and the Isouard family's connection with the French regime had resulted in him being appointed as Commissioner of the Theatre in Valletta, as well as *Commissaire du Spectacle* by Vaubois on 19 September 1798.[221] Morale had to be maintained and entertainments for the occupying and later besieged French forces had to be a priority. Isouard was their man for such a position, and he acquitted himself well in this task. In *Azzopardi,* there are a number of documents that illustrate the duties undertaken by the composer in the management and theatrical presentations at the theatre. Isouard was diligent and active in his new position. However as the siege of Valletta continued, performances grew more difficult to mount, and even lighting oil for the theatre lamps became unobtainable.[222]

Opera and theatre in Valletta were well served by the Manoel Theatre.[223] Designed by the Italian architect Romano Carapecchia,[224] the theatre had been constructed at the instigation of Grand Master Antonio Manoel de Vilhena,[225] and was inaugurated on 19 January 1732 with a performance of the play *Merope* by the dramatist Scipione Maffei.[226] As previously mentioned, in this opening night premiere, the seven roles in the play, both male and female, were acted by the knights from the *Langue* of Italy. The first opera staged in the theatre was Johann Adolf Hasse's *Artaserse.*[227] The performers were either professional singers from Naples or Sicily, or possibly some of the knights, many of whom were

[221] NLM, Arch. 6524C, op. Cit., Petition No. 1264.
[222] Vella Bondin, 25.
[223] Known in Italian as the *Teatro Manoel*.
[224] Romano Carapecchia was the Rome born, chief architect of the Order. He was appointed to the position on Malta in 1706 and was responsible for the design of many notable works, both churches and fortifications. He also designed the Convent of St Catherine (1714), in lower Republic Street, and the Demandlox houses in South Street, both in Valletta.
[225] Manoel de Vilhena (1663-1736), was Portuguese born, of the *Langue* of Castile. He was elected the sixty-sixth Grand Master of the Order of Malta on 19 June 1722, and was responsible for commissioning Fort Manoel in Marsamxett Creek and the construction of the Manoel Theatre.
[226] Paul Xuereb, *The Manoel Theatre – a short history* (Malta, Midsea Books, 2010), 4.
[227] Johann Adolf Hasse (1699-1783). His *Artaserse* was premiered in 1730 at the *Teatro San Giovanni Grisostomo* in Venice and achieved great popularity throughout Europe. Hasse's *opera seria Demetrio*, also set to a text by Metastasio, was a very new opera, having received its premiere in the same theatre in Venice in January 1732.

accomplished instrumentalists or singers. This first opera was later followed later in the same year by Hasse's *opera seria, Demetrio.*

Based by Carapecchia on the design of the Teatro Santa Cecilia, which opened in Palermo in 1692, the new theatre in Valletta had thirty-nine boxes in three tiers in a horseshoe shape, and accommodated a little over 600 spectators. In the restoration, completed under the British period, another level of boxes was subsequently added. It was in this efficient baroque gem that Isouard performed many of his operas during his Maltese period. Possibly, during the time of his study in Naples and on a return visit to Malta, Isouard presented his first opera, *Casaciello* at the Manoel Theatre in the *Carnevale* of 1793, probably in the traditional month of January. It had an interesting cast and background history.

In 1818 King Ferdinand of the Two Sicilies paid a state visit to Rome, where he met his exiled brother Charles IV, the King of Spain.[228] On the way he shot four wild boars, which he sent on before him, as an offering to His Holiness. The two Kings soon departed for Naples. The wags in Rome pasquinaded:

> *Coi peli innanzi e colle corna dietro*
> *Viene Ferdinando a visitar San Pietro.*[229]

King Charles had left his wife Maria Luisa of Parma in Rome, in the Palazzo Barberini, and within the ever-proximity of his Prime Minister, Manuel de Godoy. She died there on 2 January 1819, with the ever-attentive Godoy by her bedside. The barbs of these lines and the forceful and enlightening words of his brother Ferdinand brought home the reality of Charles' domestic situation.[230]

On this occasion Ferdinand also brought to Rome two famous Neapolitan comedians and singers, bearing the stage names of *Pellegrino* and *Casacciello*. Ferdinand, who had an earthy sense of humour laughed heartily at their performances, but the supercilious Romans

[228] Charles IV had abdicated his throne in 1808 and was living in exile in Rome. He and his family are immortalised in the great portrait by Goya, executed in 1800.
[229] Acton, 662. Loosely translated as, 'To visit Saint Peter comes Ferdinand, with bristles before and horns behind'.
[230] King Charles, devastated at the loss of his wife died eighteen days after, on 20 January.

did not. The name and the Neapolitan reputation of the second actor/singer may have been the genesis of the first opera by Isouard, or rather serenata about the joys of love, entitled *Casaciello, perseguitato da un mago*. *Casaciello*, was the performing stage name of the celebrated actor and singer Antonio Casaccia (1719-1793), and also his brother Giuseppe. They and indeed both of their sons were household names in Naples during Isouard's stay. Both Casaccias had sung in many of Cimarosa's *opere buffe* in Naples, and the performers' rather broad theatrical renditions may have given Isouard and the possible librettist, Saint Priest, satirical fodder for the material for the libretto.[231]

That Isouard enticed an actor/singer of the Casaccia family, in this case, Filippo Casaccia to Malta, to perform the lead role of *Casacciello* in his first opera or serenata, was quite a coup.[232] Filippo Casaccia had also sung in Catania in 1778, in Paisiello's opera *Il tamburo notturno*. This *opera buffa in tre atti* had premiered in Naples in 1773 at the Teatro Nuovo.[233] He would have been well known by reputation to Valletta audiences, and in fact he later returned to Valletta to be the joint impresario of the Manoel Theatre in 1805-1806.[234] The other two performers in the work were, as *La Nina*, Teresina Motta and as *Il Mago*, Vincenzo Guida. The libretto survives in both the French and the later Italian version, the latter having one small additional character in the text, that of *Un Lacquais*. The bill for the printing of the libretto in Italian survives, being a cost of 1 s*cudo* and 6 *tari*.[235]

The title pages are interesting. On the front page of the Italian libretto is the text*: Casacielle Perseguitato da un Mago. Scena di Carnovale. Tradotta dal Francese. Dedicata All Ill[ustrissi]mo Sig(nor) Cav[aliere] e Comm[endatore] de Saint Priest. E Posta in Musica Dall'umo(umilissimo) e devmo(devotissimo) suo servo Niccolò Isouard.*[236] The original French libretto, also printed on Malta under the title*, Casacielle persecuté par un Magicien. Scene Comique, a M. Nicolo Isouard, includes* a short poem which reads:

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[231] Ulderico Rolandi, 'Musica e Musicisti in Malta' in *Archivio Storico di Malta 1* (Rome: Archivio Storico di Malta, 1930) 107. Rolandi cites a cantata entitled *Hébé,* set to a text by Saint Priest and composed around 1796-1797.

[232] ACM and Azzopardi. *Casacciello* printed libretto, Italian version. The character of Casacciello also appears as one of a quartet of *bouffon* entertainers in Isouard's *Opéra-comique* of 1808, *Cimarosa*.

[233] Andrea della Corte, *Paisiello – L'Estetica Musicale di P. Metastasio* (Turin: ed. Fratelli Bocca, 1922), 257.

[234] Xuereb, 28-29.

[235] Arch 2064 f.8, recto.

[236] The *m* in the words *Dall'umo* and *devmo* have an ~ above them, obviously denoting abbreviations.

Vous, de qui les talens me font tant de plaisir;
Vous ajoutés, par eux, à ce que je veus dire;
Ainsi dans cet ouvrage, enfant de mon loisir,
Si quelque folle idée a pû vous faire rire.
Votre chant expressif scait la faire applaudir.[237]

In Xuereb the dedicatee is mentioned as François-Emmanuel Guignard, comte de Saint Priest (1735-1821), French Ambassador to the Sublime Porte in Istanbul.[238] But Frà François had left his Vows as a Knight of Malta and had married in 1785. Alternatively the dedicatee could have possibly been the Chevalier Frà Charles de Saint Priest?[239] Admitted into the Order of Malta, reaching the rank of a *Commendatore* (*Commandeur*), and a Jacobin supporter, Frà Charles was based at the time on Malta, as Captain of the Galleys.[240] He was a Freemason and a listed member of the Lodge of St John of Secrecy and Harmony.[241] He later departed into exile in Trieste with Grand Master von Hompesch on 18 June 1798.[242]

Little is known about this *scene comique*, and no records or diaries about the performance have been found. Only a single copy of the two versions of the printed libretti and the invoice for the printing survive.[243] The humorous story, recounts how 'the clownish Casaciello is transformed successively into both a bear and then a cock by enchantment, before he wins his love'.[244] In common with all of Isouard's operas performed on Malta, no operatic music has survived, except for an overture/sinfonia, possibly for one of the Maltese period operas. The score of this work will be found in the edition accompanying this thesis (No. 38), and the manuscripts of the orchestral parts are located in the Franciscan Archives of the Commissariat of The Holy Land in Valletta.

[237] Wignacourt Museum, Rabat, Malta.
[238] Xuereb, *The Manoel Theatre*, 28. Saint Priest is presumed to be the author of the travel book, *Malte par un voyager français*, published anonymously in Malta in 1791 and dedicated to de Rohan.
[239] Freller cites Frà Charles as the author of this travel book *Malte par un voyager*. Freller, *Malta and the Grand Tour*, 36.
[240] Testa, *The French in Malta*, 46.
[241] Agius, 177.
[242] Testa, *The French in Malta*, 125.
[243] Wignacourt Museum and NLM.
[244] Xuereb, 28.

As mentioned above, Isouard composed his *L'avviso ai maritati*, written in 1794 for Florence. It was an opera repeated in no less than six other theatres within two years, and this was followed in the same year by his *opera seria, Artaserse (Re di Persia)*, commissioned by the theatre in Livorno. Although the former opera was certainly a success, Isouard seems to have made no attempt to stage either work at the Manoel Theatre in Valletta, especially during the time when he was briefly in charge of theatrical activities under the French regime. Because of the absence of any music, printed libretti or diary entries, we know literally nothing about the following operas from Isouard's Maltese period. Did some of them ever exist?

His next known work, composed and possibly staged at the Manoel in Valletta was his opera *Rinaldo d'Asti*. It was composed to a libretto by Giuseppe Carpane, after Jean Baptiste Radet and Pierre-Yves Barré's work *Renaud d'Aste*. This libretto had already been set operatically by the composer De Ferrari in Lisbon (possibly the librettist's brother), and also by Marcos Antônio Portugal (Portogallo), which premiered at the Teatro San Moisè in Venice in 1794.[245] In this version of the opera, there is an economical cast of only five singers, one well suited to the financial limitations of the Manoel. The version by Portugal was later staged in Lisbon in 1799.[246]

The next opera of Isouard was a setting of the libretto by the Roman Abate Pietro Petrosellini, (also known by the stage pseudonym of Enisildo Prosindio) of an operatic setting in Italian of Caron de Beaumarchais' play *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*.[247] Petrosellini had written many libretti, including *La contadine bizarre* of 1763 for Niccolò Piccinni and *L'incongnita perseguitata,* again for the same composer.[248] These were followed in 1772, again for Piccinni and for Venice, of his *L'atratto ovvero il giocatore Fortunate*. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* or *l'inutil precauzione* was premiered in St Petersburg on 26 September 1782. During the reign of Czarina Catherine II, this city was the home to several Italian composers of note, including Paisiello and Sarti. It was an excerpt from Sarti's opera of 1782, *Fra i due litiganti il terzo gode* that was parodied in the supper scene in the act two finale of Mozart's *Don*

[245] Taddeo Weil, *I Teatri Musicale Veneziani* , 457
[246] Almanacco di Gherardo Casaglia.
[247] Weil, 243.
[248] *Ibid.* 250.

Giovanni. Apart from the score, and the names of the cast of the first performance of Il Barbiere, few documentary details of the Paisiello survive.[249] But it was an opera and a libretto that had far reaching literary and social effects in the late eighteenth century, as grasped by Mozart in his *Le Nozze di Figaro*, which was the postlude of the first work.[250]

After the premiere, *Il Barbiere* was first staged in Naples in the following year (22 November 1783), at the Teatro di Corte di Caserta (the Court Theatre in the Palace of Caserta). Paisiello's opera was first staged in Versailles in 1784, and in Paris on 22 July 1789, at the Théâtre de Monsieur in the Palais de Tuileries. Its subsequent season in that city could have been possibly known to Isouard, who would have been familiar with the play and its Jacobin sympathies.[251] Again the Paisiello work is an opera with no real chorus and a small cast of five major soloists and a couple of *buffi comprimarii,* who, as in Rossini's version of the opera, sneeze and yawn. Sadly, no programme details or printed libretto survive from the Malta performance, which is listed as taking place in 1796 at the Teatro Manoel.[252]

Isouard's sixth opera, *Il bottaio* was his first opera to be composed in two distinct versions. The first was presented in Italian at the Manoel Theatre in 1796-7. It was revived four years later, at the Théâtre Feydeau in Paris on 19 May 1801, in a new version in French as *Le tonnelier*. The libretto was by Etienne Joseph Bernard Delrieu (c1760-1836) and Antoine François Quétant. The work had already been composed by Francois-Joseph Gossec (1734-1829), adapted from the French libretto, *L'amant sylphe* of 1783 by Quetant.[253] The work was again economical in the compact size of the cast, there being only four soloists; a soprano, tenor, baritone and bass. It is possible that from this opera and onwards, Isouard may have used spoken dialogue, instead of secco recitative. It was an economical method of presenting smaller scale theatrical works in the *opéra-comique* style that was becoming fashionable. For the dramatically perceptive Isouard, the utilisation of spoken dialogue also

[249] Andrea della Corte, *Paisiello*, 259.
[250] Petrosellini is best known for his adapting the libretto of Raniero de Calzabigi into Italian verse and set by Mozart as his *La Finta Giardiniera*, K196. Pasquale Anfossi, the brother of Vincenzo, the *maestro di cappella* of St John's in Valletta, had composed the first setting of this libretto (Rome 1773).
[251] Almanacco di Gherardo Casaglia.
[252] Marie Briquet/David Charlton, 'Isouard, Nicolas', *The New Grove.* Xuereb, 17.
[253] FBN. FRBNF. 12006128. BNF Musique, L. 18143.

allowed rapid changes to lines of the text, so that the dramatic flow of the works could be increased.

An *opera buffa* in one act, *L'improvisata in campagna*, is said to have followed the season of *Il bottaio*.[254] This was another setting of a libretto of Etienne Joseph Delrieu, and received its premiere at the Manoel Theatre in 1797. Like the previous opera, it was also revised into a French version, being presented as *L'impromptu de campagne* at the Théâtre-Favart on 30 June 1801. Nothing is known of the original Italian version - not even the cast, for no libretto or score has survived. But we do have the score of the 1801 French version, and Letelleir comments on the elegance of the overture, several of the arias, the sextet and the 'developed finale'.[255]

I Due Avari, a *commedia per musica* in two acts, was first presented at the Manoel in the winter season of 1797. It may have been based by the unknown librettist after the successful text of Charles Georges Fenouillot de Falbaire's *Les Deux Avares*. This libretto had been set by Grétry as an *opéra-bouffon* and given its premiere at Fontainebleau on 27 October 1770.[256] It was a product of the age, which had become entranced with the vogue for things Turkish - a fashion that produced such musical works as Gluck's *Les pèlerins de la Mecque* (*Le rencontre imprévue* 1764), and *Le Cadi Dupé* (1761), as well as Mozart's *Zaide* and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. The Spanish composer Martin y Soler (1754-1806), is said to have also set this libretto in Italian as his first operatic exercise in 1776, but no score has survived. In the absence of the libretto for Isouard's version of the opera, one has to be guided by the requirements of the opera by Grétry, which utilises a small cast of seven soloists. This work was not the only one written by Isouard around a Turkish theme. Isouard's opéra-comique *Le Médicin turc* was first performed in Paris in 1803. Like Mozart's *Die Entführung*, the work was also set in Turkey and its brilliant overture is scored for a *banda turca*, of timpani, cymbals and triangle.[257]

[254] Xuereb, 67 spells the title as *L'Improvvisata in Campagna.*
[255] Robert Ignatius Letellier, *Opéra-comique: Composers and their works at the Opéra-Comique (1762-1915)* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 438.
[256] Charlton, *Gréty,* 67-8.
[257] In the Catalogue of Stage Works, in the appendix, it is No. 19.

Isouard's ninth operatic work, and the penultimate work possibly performed in the Manoel Theatre on Malta was the *drama serio eroico*, *Ginevra di Scozia.* The libretto is by the Veronese writer Gaetano Rossi (1774-1855). In two productive years, Rossi wrote no less than 9 opera libretti for Venetian theatres such as the San Benedetto and La Fenice, for composers including Antonio Zingarelli (1752-1837) and Giovanni Simone Mayr (1763-1845). Mayr composed an opera to the same text of *Ginevra di Scozia* and this work is mentioned as the first musical setting of the libretto. It received its premiere in Trieste, on 21 April 1801. If Isouard had followed Rossi's text, then this would have been a fully cast opera with chorus. The question is how did Isouard obtain clearance from Rossi to set a text that was not officially authorised until the version by Mayr in 1801? The printed libretto to the Mayr opera calls for seven soloists, as well as chorus, and if these forces were followed by Isouard, then his opera would have been a major undertaking for a theatre with the space and financial restrictions of the Manoel Theatre.

The final opera, supposed to have been composed and presented on Malta by Isouard is the *commedia per musica, Il barone d'Alba chiara.* Written in two acts, this work is quoted as having been presented in the *Carnevale* of 1798, which would have meant in the month of January. Other than occasional references to the work in most dictionaries of music, I can find no further details concerning the title or a possible librettist. It is as though the work never existed, and may have been taken up by references to it made by the composer, late in his life, to the French musicologist Choron.[258] With this work ends Isouard's operatic life on Malta, interrupted as it was by the French invasion and his departure for Paris in 1800.

As we have seen, during the period of the French occupation from 1798 to 1800, Isouard was appointed to be in charge of the Manoel Theatre in Valletta. It is unusual that Isouard made no attempt to do revivals of his earlier operas. Apart from the two revisions done for Paris, it is as though they never existed. The details of the surviving documents concerning Isouard, and his role in the presentation of theatrical works are completely covered in *Azzopardi* and can be consulted there. Fortuitously, we do have a few observations concerning the performing standards in the Manoel Theatre at the time. One visiting

[258] Alexandre-Étienne Choron (1771-1834). Choron was the director of the Paris Opera from January 1816 and translated Francesco Azopardi's treatise on music into French.

Englishman, Reginald Colt Hoare comments in 1790 that: 'the theatre is very small and the comedians very bad'.[259]

On 14 June 1798, the day of the landing of some of the French troops on Malta, Edmé-Francois Jomard (1777 -1862), a young engineer and archaeologist, who was a passenger of the French vessel *Le Genéreux*, wrote a detailed letter.[260] In the evening he went to the Manoel Theatre to see the play with music, *L'inganno per amore*. He found 'the music was excellent and well performed, the voices were good, but the acting was atrocious'.[261] He was possibly referring to the opera *L'inganni amoroso* by Isouard's teacher Guglielmi. This *commedia per musica,* to a libretto by Giuseppe Polomba had been premiered in Naples in 1786.[262] It is more than likely that Nicolò, who would have been familiar with the opera, was in charge of the performance of the work.

It is sad to record that, from the time Isouard left Malta in September 1800 with the retiring French and their Maltese collaborators, to my knowledge not one of his operas has been performed, either at the Manoel or in other theatres on Malta.[263]

[259] Reginald Colt Hoare, *Recollections abroad during the year 1790: Sicily and Malta* (Bath: 1817), 185.
[260] *Rivista del Collegio Araldico* (Rome: 1909).
[261] Testa, *The French in Malta*, 129, n.1.
[262] *The New Grove.*
[263] Xuereb, 24.

10.

The French on Malta and Isouard.

In the Mediterranean context, and at a crucial strategic point in history, Malta with its fortified harbours and walled cities was an important position to hold. That the Order ruled Malta was both a positive factor and also a negative one. The negative was that, whilst in fortifying and defending the Islands, and also safeguarding the inhabitants, the presence of the Knights did attract the attentions and at times the military and naval forces of the Ottoman Turks, as well as the rulers of the Agencies in Tripoli and Algiers. In a positive light, the Christian and neutral position of the Order, almost guaranteed that it would not be attacked by any of the Christian powers. Neutrality with other Christian nations was a long standing policy of the Order, although aggressive action was at times taken with the merchant vessels of the Venetian Republic and France, which traded with Egypt and The Levant. Malta's strategic importance to the French assumed a real significance, especially taking into account the rapidly changing patterns of power in the Mediterranean at the time, due to the recent Napoleonic victories, and the placement of French client administrations in these conquered territories.[264] In addition, possessing the Grand Harbour on Malta meant that the French Navy, preoccupied with the task of maintaining lines of communication and supply with Napoleon and the Army of Egypt, would have had a secure and impregnable anchorage. Another fact was that Napoleon could pillage the Order's Treasury, and with plunder from the Churches, assist in the financing of the entire Egyptian expedition.[265]

One important episode in French-Maltese relations has been generally overlooked. Napoleon's attention to the Islands was demonstrated in a letter from him, to the Directory in Paris of 26 May 1797. In this he suggested that the Prime Minister of Spain, Manuel Godoy (Prince of the Peace), be approached by *marechal* Dominique Perignon, the French

[264] As a British Admiral, Lord Nelson's attitude to the strategic importance of the Grand Harbour and Valletta was curious to say the least. Speaking in the House of Lords, Nelson said that concerning the return of the Knights and the Order 'Malta was of no sort of consequence to this country' and 'in any hands but the French, it became immaterial to us'. Parliamentary History *PH,* vol. 36, col. 185.
[265] Paul Strathern, *Napoleon in Egypt* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2007), 33.

Minister in Madrid with a proposal. The suggestion to be made to Godoy was the following: 'Malta is extraordinarily important to us, the Grand Master is dying, and his successor should, it seems be a German. It would require five or six hundred thousand francs to get a Spaniard named. Would it be possible to drop a hint to the Prince of the Peace, that here is something that should interest him?'[266] Under obvious pressure from his Queen Maria Luisa, Charles IV of Spain was in favour, and Talleyrand, the Foreign Minister, who was in his unrivalled diplomatic element here, undertook to negotiate a settlement.

Godoy was interested, and despite being already being married and not in religious vows, he partly took the bait. His conditions were that, he had to be in receipt of a considerable sum of money, and that he should be dispensed with taking the vows, particularly that of chastity, to hold the position of Grand Master. Despite being assured that funds would be provided 'to enable you to assume with honour the new dignity intended for you', Godoy had foreseen the eventual results. Nothing came of the plan, and Emmanuel von Hompesch was elected head of the Order. But Malta had been planted in Napoleon's mind as an essential, for his grand plan for Europe, especially in securing French control of the Mediterranean.

With Napoleon's decision to invade Egypt, then nominally part of the Ottoman Empire, Malta became even more important for his Mediterranean intentions, and it was resolved that the French Fleet accompanying the expeditionary force in 1798 to Egypt, should stop at Malta, and force the capitulation and expulsion of the Knights. Several aspects of these events on Malta need to be mentioned, especially as they impacted on the Isouard Xuereb family, both father and son. Needless to say, this development for both Nicolò and Fortunato Isouard was a welcome and important one.

The details of the invasion of the Islands by the French contingent en route to Egypt are well known and have been addressed firstly by Hardman and later in the excellent study by

[266] French National Archives, Napoleon to the Directory, Letter 26 May 1797. In effect Napoleon was offering the opportunity and the bribe, for Godoy to be elected Grand Master.

Carmel Testa, *The French in Malta*.[267] The combined forces of the Order on Malta at the time consisted of only 322 knights, of whom 200 were French with ninety Italians, twenty-five Spanish, eight Portuguese, four Germans and five Bavarians. Of these fifty were aged and many sick. The Grand Master's bodyguard was only two-hundred men strong, supplemented by the Maltese Regiment and sailors from the fleet numbering another 2,650 men.[268] It was an impossibly low number of combatants with which to resist Napoleon's army and naval forces.[269] The French naval contingent was so formidable that it was assembled in five ports – Toulon, Marseilles, Genoa (from December 1797 part of the Ligurian Republic), Corsica and Civita Vecchia, one of the ports in the former Papal States.[270] There were over 270 transport ships alone in the fleet. Some resistance was made, but von Hompesch, faced with dissention from the French sympathisers in the Maltese community, and a fifth column amongst some of the French knights, capitulated.[271] Both Nicolò and his father were considered as trusted collaborators, and were offered positions and salaries in the new French government established on Malta. Isouard, father and son provided valuable and not disinterested service to the new administration, and their unconditional commitment was noted by many of the Maltese.

The few documents that survive concerning Nicolò's service to the French are completely covered in *Azzopardi*, or discussed above, and I will only add a few points. One of the final times that Isouard is mentioned on Malta took place on 28 July 1800, when General Vaubois and a few friends went to St John's to hear Nicolò play some music on the organ of the Conventual Church. This meant that while the Office was not being sung in the Conventual Church, some musical activity on the part of their returned organist was occurring. Whilst there, the General noticed that some of the funerary trophies in the side altars, of several of

[267] William Hardman, *A History of Malta during the period of the French and English Occupations, 1789-1815* (London: 1909. Reprinted Valletta: Midsea Books, 1994).
[268] Testa, *The French in Malta*, 23.
[269] *Ibid.* 23. The total number of French forces amounted to 400 ships, transporting 54,000 men.
[270] R. C. Anderson, *Naval Wars in the Levant 1559-1853* (Liverpool: Liverpool at the University Press, 1952), 354-355.
[271] Thirty-four of the knights elected to follow Napoleon to Egypt. Their names are listed in *Lavigerie*, 164-179. However *Lavigerie* provides the names of fifty knights who are said to have continued on to Egypt with the French forces. News of the French capture of Malta reached Naples on the evening of 17 June 1798, and the British Ambassador, Sir William Hamilton, reported details of the invasion and the repercussion to both the British and Neapolitan Governments in a dispatch the next day, as well as to Admiral Nelson. John A. Davis and Giovanni Capuano, *The Hamilton Letters – The Naples Dispatches of Sir William Hamilton* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2008), 101-103.

the deceased Grand Masters had been covered over with the French *tricolor*. On being advised that this disrespectful act had been done on the direct order of the former French Commissioner, d'Angely, Vaubois ordered the French flags be removed. To apologise for any disrespect to the deceased, Vaubois gave thirty *tari* to the sacristan of St John's and his assistant seven *tari*.[272] It was Vaubois who directly blamed d'Angely for all of the misfortunes that later befell the French on Malta.[273]

On 18 June 1798, and at 2am in the morning, Grand Master von Hompesch went into exile in Trieste accompanied by twenty five of the senior knights and a few Maltese supporters. Establishing a temporary headquarters of the Convent there, he spent much time attempting to obtain support for the Order, but to no avail. After an inglorious exile he eventually died in Montpellier on 12 May 1805, ignored by most and excoriated by the remnants of the knights in Russia, who had 'elected' Czar Paul as the *de jure* Grand Master.[274] Most of the knights, except the elderly and the foreign clergy were expelled by the French from Malta. At once significant changes were made in the legal system, and the Inquisition was also expelled. But the efficiency of the great hospital and education system greatly compromised. When the French eventually attempted to despoil the churches, the Maltese rose up in Mdina and hemmed the French garrison into the three cities of Valletta, the Birgu and Senglea, where they remained, until they in turn capitulated on 5 September 1800 to joint English, Portuguese and Sicilian forces.

[272] Anonymous Diary. *Diario anonimo* f. 71. Gollcher Foundation, Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta, concerning events in Valletta between 16 May 1799 and 14 October 1800.
[273] Testa, *The French in Malta*, 407 and 436 n.2.
[274] Carlo Rapozzi, *Il rifugio triestino dell'Ordine de Malta 1798-1799* (Trieste: Edizioni Italo Svevo, 2006). Frà Emmanuel von Hompesch, 71st Grand Master of the Order, is buried in Montpellier in the Church of Saint Eulalie, where a commemorative plaque was unveiled on 5 May 2005, by the 78th Grand Master of the Order, Frà Andrew Bertie. He is commemorated on Malta by an eighteenth-century ceremonial archway, and a recent bust at Zabbar, Malta – formerly Città Hompesch.

11.

Final days on Malta and departure for France.

Isouard and his family were obviously regarded as traitors by many Maltese, as well as members of the Order. Seeking safety and security, Nicolò probably left for France with General Vaubois in the final evacuation of the surrendered French forces, which took place from 8 September until 1 October 1800.[275] He is cited as having settled in Paris on 5 February 1800, when Malta was still under French occupation.[276] This citation must be incorrect, as Vaubois had listened to Isouard play the organ at St. John's in July of the same year. However recent research has found that Isouard, together with the former French Consul, Jean André Caruson, had indeed departed on 30 March on board the eighty gun ship of the line, *Le Guillaume Tell,* which attempted to break out of Valletta Harbour.[277] After some pursuit by the blockading Allied fleet, the French vessel was attacked on three sides by three British warships, causing two hundred deaths amongst the 1,000 on board.[278] The effect on Isouard and the other civilians fleeing Malta on the French battleship must have been frightening and devastating. The traumatised civilian passengers were returned outside the walls of Valletta, where some of them like Isouard, re-entered the city. Governor Vaubois was troubled by the news, having further mouths to feed from his precariously low food stocks. Isouard was recognised outside the Porte des Bombes, near the gates of Floriana, on 10 April, by the Adjutant Beaulieu, who was shown the captured French officers of the *Le Guillaume Tell*.

However his presence on Malta as late as 4 September, 1800, is confirmed by the discovery in an auction catalogue of a *Stato Libero*, signed by him and bearing that date. Auctioned by *L'Autographes. S.A*. of Geneva, the date and year of the auction are unknown, but the incomplete detail of the text in the catalogue reads:

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[275] *Ibid.* 825-6.
[276] Buhagiar, *Azopardi,* 51.
[277] Testa, *The French in Malta,* 133 n.30. Various authorities cite this battleship as being of either 74 guns (Anderson, *Naval Wars*) or 80 guns (Testa).
[278] Anderson, *Naval Wars*, 385. The full list of Maltese refugees who went into exile and were supported by the French Government is printed in *Blondy*, 498-506. Alain Blondy, *L'Ordre de Malte au XVIII siècle – Des derniers splendeurs à la ruine* (Paris: Editions Bouchene, 2002).

Item No. 142.
ISOUARD Nicolò (Au sujet de) – P.S par le "Président de la municipalité de Malte, 1 p. in-folio « Cité de Malte », 4. IX 1800. En-tête avec vignette et sceau sous papier.

Rare document délivre le jour précédant la capitulation de Malte par le président de la « Municipalité de l'Ouest de la Cite de Malte » certifiant… »…..l'état libre du C.n Nicolas Isouard….[qui] n'a jamais contracté aucun engagement de Mariage…. » etc.

Nicolò Isouard, dit aussi Nicolò di Malta (1775[3]-1818) est l'un des plus illustres personnages originaires de cette île. Bon musicien et compositeur d'opéras, il exerça principalement son activité en France des 1799, ayant suivi à Paris le général Vaubois, signataire de la capitulation du 5 septembre 1800.

Papier à en-tête imprime de la « République Français – Liberté – Egalité…. », avec vignette gravée représentant la Liberté, debout, s'appuyant sur le faisceau et tenant de la main gauche la pique surmontée du bonnet frégien. Le sceau de l'Etat, plaque sous papier, s'inspire du même modèle. Malte fut sous occupation française de juin 1798 – époque de l'expédition en Egypte – à septembre 1800.

Or in English:

No. 142.
Isouard, Nicolò. P.S. by "President" of the Municipality of Malta, 1 p. "City of Malta" 4 IX 1800. Header with sticker and seal under paper.

Rare document issued the day before the surrender of Malta by the President of the "municipality of the West of the city of Malta", certifying "... the ' free State of the C.n. Nicolas Isouard….". [who] had never contracted any commitment of marriage.» etc.

Nicolas Isouard, known also as Nicolò di Malta (1775-1818) is one of the most illustrious people who come from this island. A good musician and composer of operas, he primarily carried out his career in France, in Paris in 1799, following General Vaubois, signing of the surrender of Malta on 5 September 1800.

The letterhead illustrations and text on the paper are of the "French Republic - Liberty - Equality…." with a etched vignette representing Liberty, standing based on the beam, holding in her left hand a spear, bearing a Phrygian bonnet. The seal of the State, embossed on paper, is based on the same design.

The sale price realised was 400 Euros, and the buyer's name and address is currently unknown.

On arrival in Paris Isouard eventually lived until his death on 23 March 1818 in the Rue des Filles St Thomas in the second *arrondissement*.[279]

[279] Rolandi cites Isouard as composing a Cantata in Paris in 1802 entitled *La Paix* for the Treaty of Amiens, which restored Malta to the Order, an eventuality that never occurred. Rolandi 107. The same author cites a Cantata composed by Isouard in Paris in 1805 to an unnamed text by the French poet Louis-Pierre Baour-Lormain (1770-1854). Rolandi 105.

12.

Isouard and the Order of Malta 1794 - 1815.

The relations that Nicolò Isouard enjoyed with the Order of Malta were built upon his desire to attain security of employment and a position in society. He sought and achieved membership in the Order, but was to be a disappointment to his patrons. Beside their father being an employee of the Order of St John, both Nicolò Isouard and his older brother, Jacobus (Aloysius Ilarion Jacobus Raphael Prosperus – born 20 October 1771) were *Donats* of the Order. Jacobus was created a *Donato* of the Order by Grand Master de Rohan by a Magistral Bull of 1 July 1794 [280] and Nicolò on 14 December 1795.

Long established policy of the Order decreed that Maltese citizens were generally not accepted into the Order as Knights of Justice. Some aristocratic Maltese families arranged to have the birth of their children take place in Sicily, so that if a male, they could be possibly considered for eventual membership, even as a Knight. But Maltese subjects could be considered as possible members of the Order in holding the rank or grade of a *Donat*. *Donats* or *Confrati* (Confrere), who because of their services to the Order, were allowed to wear the lower portion of the Maltese cross of the Order.[281] *Donats* took no part in the actual government of the Order, but were allowed access to employment in the Order's service in lucrative posts such as 'notaries, artillery officers, store-keepers, and clerks', both on Malta, or in the Order's properties in Europe.[282] As members of the Order they were able to receive a small salary – in Isouard's case, one hundred *scudi*, for as long as he was resident on Malta. In applying for admission to the Order as a *Donat*, in common with all knights, Isouard would normally have paid passage money *(passaggio)* as a contribution toward his entry. Following his brother's earlier example, Isouard officially applied to be

[280] AOM. Arch. 617, *Minutario* 1794, *Tomo* 2, f. 102r and v.
[281] The design of the insignia of a *Donat* of the Order, bearing only the lower three arms of the Maltese cross is still worn today as an insignia and also on the church mantle of *Donats*.
[282] Testa, *The Life and Times of Grand Master Pinto*, 19.

appointed as a *Donat* of the Order and on 17 July 1795 Isouard submitted a petition to Pope Pius VI.[283] The text of this document is in the Vatican Secret Archives.[284]

This request to Pope Pius is unusual in that Isouard sought an exemption to have the usual payment of the *passaggio* (passage money or entry fee), rescinded in full. Payment of the *passaggio* was a normal requirement for all new members of the Order. This applied to Knights of Justice, Conventual Chaplains, Serving Brothers as well as *Donats*.[285] But in this petition, Isouard also sought to have access to the normal pension or stipend normally paid to members of that rank in the Order. As we have seen in Chapter One, exceptions could be made. After deliberation in Rome, on 4 November in the same year, the Holy See replied positively to Isouard's letter of supplication, granting all of the exemptions and conditions that the composer had submitted.[286]

Another name is mentioned in Isouard's application, one also seeking admittance as a *Donat* of the Order, and that name is Gregorio Fidanza. It is possible that the Fidanza, cited in the Papal reply to the original petition of Isouard to the Holy See, was the Knight of Malta and Italian painter of the same name. Born in 1754 (and not 1759 as some earlier art historians write), Fidanza was held in high regard by Grand Master de Rohan.[287] At the time of his application he was living in Rome in the via Bocca di Leone, which was close to the Embassy of the Order of Malta to The Holy See, based in the via Condotti.[288] Fidanza died in Rome in 1823 and his portrait, painted by the Russian painter Orest Adamovich Kiprenkii (1782-1836), is held in a private collection.[289]

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[283] Pope Pius VI - Count Giovanni Angelo Braschi (Pontiff from 1775-1799. He died in exile on 29 August 1799, in Valence, France)

[284] Archivum Secretum Apostol. Vaticanum. Sec- Brev. No. 4289, ff. 77r, 77v.

[285] Another letter, in Italian was sent by Isouard to the Pope, asking for the same exemption from the payment of the *Passaggio.* It is reproduced in *Azzopardi*, 10. The original is to be found in the Archivum Secretum Apostol. Vaticanum. Sec-Brev. No. 4289 f. 4289, f. 79r.

[286] Archivum Secretum Apostol. Vaticanum. Sec-Brev. No. 4289 ff. 78r, 80v, 81v.

[287] Fidanza was a fine painter in the style of Claude Lorrain, and his elder brother, Franceso was also a painter of some reputation. Gregorio Fidanza was received as a *Donat* three days after Isouard – the brevet being signed by the same Papal authorities as Isouard's. Both covering pages are also in the Archivum Secretum Apostol. Vaticanum.

[288] The Grand Magistry, and the headquarters Convent of The Order of Malta is still based in Rome in the Palazzo Malta, formerly Palazzo Bosio, at the via Condotti, 68.

[289] Christie's Auction File.

On 14 December 1795, Grand Master de Rohan created Isouard a *Donat* of the Order with the following Magistral Bull. It is worth providing the complete text, as the Grand Master's brevet outlines the exemptions and privileges, as requested by Isouard.

> *In Nomine etc. Die 14 mensis Decembris 1795, Emanatas auctoritate etc. sibi per infraregistratas literas apostolicas etc. Sanctissimi etc. Pii Divini Providentia Papa (Pius) VI datas Romae apud Sanctum Petrum sub anulo Piscatoris die 24 Novembris praeteriti Pontificatus sui anno 21. Cum derogatione etc. attributa. Discretum Nicolaum Isouard Xuereb enter Confrates seu Donatus mediae Crucis hujus Sacri Ordinisrecipi cupientem licet debitum passum comuni aerario per dictos Donatos, seu solvi consuetum minime persolvat nihilominus etiam in sua a Conventu absentia in Donatum, seu Confratrem huiusmodi recepit, et admisit, seu recipi et admitti madavit ; euque omnibus, in singulais juribus, prerogativis, privilegiis, gratiis, honoribus, et indultis, quibus alii Donati, seu Confratres tam de jure, usu, et conseutudine, quam alias quomodolibet utuntur, fruuntur, et gaudent, ac uti, frui, et gaudere possunt, vel poterunt quomodolibet in futurum pari modo uti, frui, et gaudere libere, ac licite possit, et valeat in omnibus, et per omnia perinde ac si dictum passagium ne reperiretur, concessit ; Eidenque Discreto Nicolao, ut licet in nulla Veneranda Lingua, aut Prioratu receptus sit, neque in eis limites habeat, aliisque necessariis, praescriptisque requisitis sis destitutus, ipse nihilominus etian in totum, quam seu quas ei super fructibus, redditibus, et providentibus Praeceptoriarum seu Commendarum, aliorumque Beneficiorum, seu Bonorum quorumcumque omnium et singularum Venerandum Linguarum, ac Prioratum tam ex Gratia Magistrali, quam a quocumque Venerando Priore, aut Bajulivo, vel Praeceptore, seu Commendario milite, aliove qualibet fratre hujus Sacri Ordinis etiam ejus consanguineo, coeteroque canonice reservari, constitui, et assignare, seu in eum transferri contigerit, consequi, et obtinere, illamque seu illas quoad vixerit, percipere, exigere, et levare, ac in suos usus, et utilitatem convertere libere, ac licite possit in omnibus, et per omnia perinde ac si tempore reservationis, constitutionis, et assignationis, seu translationis pensionis, seu pensionum huiusmodi in dicto Conventu personaliter resideret in cunctis Venerandis Linguis, seu Prioratibus praedictis esset receptus, in eisque limites, coeteraque requisita haberet indulsit, eumque ad praimissa habilitavit, ac habilem et capacem fecit et declaravit. Praesentibus Jacobo Rancourt (Ramourt ?), et Joanne Fenech E.S.F.S. Testibus.*
>
> *FR. EMMANUEL DE ROHAN Dei gratia etc. Militaris etc. Domicilii et ordinis Sancto Antonii Viennensi Magister et Custos. Discreto Nicolao Isouard Xuereb Melitensi Vassallo Nostro atque Ordinis Nostri Confratri seu Donato Nobis dilecto salutem etc. Zelus ac virtutem tuarum merita, promerentur, et Nos inducunt, ut Te favoribus, et gratia prosequamur, tuique votis facilem praebeamus assensum. Cum itaque supplicare feceris, ut facultatem, seu licentiam gestandi, et deferendi Mediam Crucem auream ad figuram habitus Nostri formatam, collo appensam, Tibi concedere dignaremur : Hinc est, quod hujusmodi Supplicationibus tuis inclinati, ac praemissorum meritorum intuitu, de nostra certa scientia, et speciali gratia, omni meliori modo, via, jure et forma, quibus melius facere possumus et debemus, tenore praesentium Tibi mediam Crucem auream ad figuram habitus Nostri formatam collo*

> *appensam, ut praedicitur, gestandi, et deferendi licentam, et facultatem damus, concedimus et liberaliter impartimur. Mandates universis etc. quacumque auctoritate etc. ne contra etc. quinimo eas studeant inviolabiliter observare. In cuius rei etc. Bulla etc. plumbea etc. Datum Melitae etc. die XIV Mensis Decembris 1795.*[290]

Nicolò Isouard's contacts with the Order of Malta did not end completely with the capitulation and departure of the Order from Malta in 1798. The return of the Bourbons to France with King Louis XVIII in May 1814, and Napoleon's exile to his small island state of Elba, meant that Isouard's circumstances in Paris decidedly changed for the worse. The composer was regarded as being too allied to the Bonaparte regime. Despite his turning his back on the Knights, who had been his previous patrons and employers, Isouard, in his own opportunistic style, tried to ingratiate himself back into the Order's favour by writing to their *Commission des Langues Étrangers* (Commission for the Foreign *Langues*). His original letter of petition has not been located in the Order's Archives in Rome, but the Commission's reply is held in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris and is dated 22 December 1814.[291] It reads:

Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem
Commission des Langues Françaises.
Nous, Bailli et Commandeurs délégués par la Commission des langues de l'Ordre de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem, après avoir vérifié les titres de M. Nicolo Isouard, Donat de l'Ordre, dans la Langue de Provence.
Nous avons reconnu qu'il est fonde à porter la Croix d'Or du dit Ordre.
Fait à Paris, le 22 Décembre, 1814
Le Secrétaire membre de la Commission, Le Commandeur Peyre de Châteauneuf
Le Bailli de Clugny, grand trésorier de l'Ordre
Le Commandeur de Bataille
Le Chevalier de Clermont, Secrétaire [de] la Commission.[292]

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[290] AOM, Arch. 6524 C, ff. 122v-123v.

[291] Bibliothèque Nationale FRBNF40989215. The catalogue entry lists the name of the entity as the *Commission de Langues Etrangers*, but the reply to Isouard is from the Order's *Commission des Langues Françaises*, based in Paris.

[292] The first three signatories had been present on Malta in 1798, and would have had memories of the role played by Isouard and his family. Sophie-Anselme-Alexandre-Benoît Peyre de Châteauneuf of the *Langue* of Provence had been received into the Order on 5 October 1786. Châteauneuf had been on Malta during the siege, and accompanied von Hompesch into exile to Trieste. The *Bailli* de Clugny, Baillif of the Morea, had been on the Grand Master's Council which had debated the surrender of Malta to the French, and was one of the successful cavalry commanders, during the initial attempts to rebuff the French landings at Marsaxlokk Bay. He became grand treasurer of the Commission in France, and died shortly afterwards in February 1816. As a Lieutenant General of the Order, he had commanded Fort Ricasoli at the entrance to the Grand Harbour. The *Commandeur* François-Charles de Bataille de Dampierre was of the *Langue* of France, and was admitted to the Order on 25 April 1754. *Commandeur* de Bataille had also been on Malta at the time, and commanded the seashore battery attached to Fort St Elmo. I assume that the fourth signatory was the Chevalier Philibert-Henri-Jules de Clermont-Montoison, admitted to the Order on 2 June 1782, who is listed as a member of the

The *Commission des Langues Françaises* was created during the rule of the Lieutenant Master Frà Andrea di Giovanni y Centelles on 30 May 1814, and was under the presidency of *le Bailli* prince Camille de Rohan.[293] Despite his rejection of the Order in 1798, and departure from Malta with the remnants of the defeated French forces and Maltese Jacobins, Isouard, like the 'prodigal son', had been forgiven by his former employers, and was confirmed in his rank of *Donat* of the Order.[294] It was one of the few successful attempts by the composer, to resurrect his career in Bourbon France.

Commission. In the *Journal des Débats,* 1 January 1816, 3., Châteauneuf is cited as representing the *Langue* of Provence, and Bataille as representing the *Langue* of France.

[293] Le Comte Michel de Pierredon, *Histoire Politique de l'Ordre Souverain de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem-Ordre de Malte* (Paris, Éditions Cultura, 1963) Vol 2, 137-140. Frà Andrea di Giovanni y Centelles, of the Grand Priory of Naples was born in Messina in 1742. Elected Lieutenant Master on the death of Frà Innigo Maria Guevara Suardo, di Giovanni administered what remained of the Order from the temporary magistral headquarters in Catania, from 25 April 1814 until his death on 10 June 1821.

[294] It may have been a premature reacceptance into the Order, for Rinaldi cites Isouard composing a work *La Révolution* in Paris in 1815, the year of Napoleon's short lived return to France. Rinaldi 107.

13.

France: 1800 – 1818.

Isouard has escaped the claustrophobic society and situation on Malta, and in the city of Paris he determined to make his stamp on the musical world there. On arrival in Paris, Isouard eventually lived at 17, rue des Filles St Thomas in the second *arrondissement* until his death on 23 March 1818. He would have been in familiar surroundings, for Paris at the time was a city with an immense performing schedule that had attracted many Italian composers including Cherubini. One of Isouard's Parisian publishers, Chez Sieber was conveniently located in number twenty-one in the same street. He immediately launched his career as a composer for the stage with two collaborations with the composer Rodolphe Kreutzer, *Le Petit Page ou La Prison d'Etat*, and the one act opera *Flaminius à Corinthe*. The former was staged at the Théâtre Feydeau in 14 February 1800 and the latter, only thirteen days later at the Opéra on 27 February. In the ensuing years he achieved immense fame and praise for his delightful *opéra-comiques*.

In Paris, on 11 January 1812 Isouard married Claudine Berthault in a civil ceremony, as a *stato libero* would have been difficult to obtain from Malta during the Napoleonic Wars.[295] It could be suggested that Isouard would have had no interest in a marriage solemnised by the Church. The marriage may not have been a happy one, for it is cited that before his death he was abandoned by his wife.[296] After the fall of Napoleon and the return of King Louis XVIII, his star waned. Increasingly, with no commissions, and suffering obvious official disapproval, he commenced a life of 'dissipation', and died prematurely on 23 March 1818. His death certificate was signed by his brother *J. B. Isouard*.[297]

[295] See above. Isouard had signed a *Stato Libero* in Valletta on 4 September 1800, one day before the French capitulation. *Archives de la Ville de Paris* V2E. 11 janvier 1812.
[296] Said, *Nicolò Isouard*.
[297] Paris. Parish Archives of *Notre Dame des Victoires*, Death Records - entry for 25 March 1818. I am not entirely sure which of Isouard's brothers signed the death certificate, but there is one possibility. The only brother who bore the initials J. B amongst his Christian names was the ninth child in the family, born on 22 August 1784. He was christened Amabilis Amans Aloysius Alexander Antonius Carolus Joannus Baptista. His godfather was *Dominus* Joannes Baptista Mattei, the Sicilian merchant who had provided Isouard with employment in Palermo, whilst he studied with Amendola. *Azzopardi*, 15.

On 6 April of the same year, an Inventory of the properties of the composer entitled *Inventaire après le décès [dècís] de M. Isouard [Nicolò],* had been drawn up, and witnessed by seven colleagues and friends, including his librettist Etienne and Isouard's notary, Lamaze.[298] A document of no less than twenty nine pages, it has been partially reprinted in *Azzopardi*.[299] Apart from providing details of the contents of his music and general library, it provides some interesting information concerning Isouard's life style, and the possible reason for his early death – that of alcoholism. The contents of the cellar, articles numbers one to seventeen of the inventory, list over 1,300 bottles of wine and liqueurs, to the value of around 1,500 *francs* – a considerable sum in Louis XVIII restoration money.

There are several other revealing names that are mentioned in the Inventory, including that of the once Grand Prior of the Anglo-Bavarian Langue of the Order of Malta, the *Bailli* (Frà) Johannes Baptist von Flachslanden. The *Bailli*, now laicised and living in Nuremberg had served on Malta, and was at one time captain general of the Order's galley fleet from 1768-1770.[300] Born in 1739, Flachslanden had been instrumental in setting up the Anglo-Bavarian *Langue* of the Order under the Elector of Bavaria, Karl Theodor (1724-1799). There was a link between Isouard and members of the *Langue*, for in the listing compiled on 16 May 1791, of the dignitaries and holders of the commanderies in the lands of Bavaria is one interesting name. Mentioned in the same clause on page twenty-two of the Inventory is the Conventual Deacon of the Order, Giuseppe Poussielgue. He was in receipt of a pension of two hundred florins, and two additional payments to the same '*Al medesimo* Poussielgue…50 fl.'[301] A member of the Poussielgue family from Malta, and holding a position in the *Langue* in Bavaria would be the link for Isouard to the retired *Baiili*. Flachslanden died in 1825.[302]

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[298] F-P, Archives Nationales, M C/Et. LXII, n. 825.

[299] *Azzopardi*, 77-80. Articles 144 to 169 of the Inventory are reproduced which mainly detail Isouard's music collection and the engravers plates of his scores, but not other essential items.

[300] Robert Dauber, *Die Marine des Johanniter-Malteser-Ritter-Ordens* (Graz: H. Weishaupt, 1989), 337.

[301] Thomas Freller, *The Anglo-Bavarian Langue of the Order of Malta* (Pietà, Malta: PIN-Pubblikazjonijiet Indipendenza, 2001), 264. The list is *entitled Dignità e Commende della Venda. Lingue d'Inghilterra, e Baviera, e Priorato di Polonia e Lituania*. In AOM, MS. 2195, f. 34, the Deacon Giuseppe Poussielgue is cited as receiving a pension of 300 scudi.

[302] Freller, 188. It was Bavarian funds, siphoned through the *Langue* by the Bavarian Minister for Finance, Franz Karl, Baron von Hompesch that secured the election of his brother, Ferdinand to the Grand Mastership. On approaching his imminent death, on 7 July 1797, Grand Master de Rohan congratulated von Hompesch on his impending successful election. This is cited in the diary of the Maltese priest, Francesco Saverio Baldacchino,

Isouard's funeral was held on the 25 March, and even there the official 'statement of death and succession' gives the wrong date of his death, as *25 Mars 1818*.[303] The funeral itself is well documented, although one feature was the non-appearance of his wife Claudine, and the absence from the funeral of his two daughters, Sophie-Nicolò (1809-1885), a singer and composer, and Anne Nicolette Nicolò (1814-1876), a pianist and composer.[304] I note that the elder daughter, Sophie-Nicole, was born before the marriage of Isouard and his wife. Isouard was continuing the easy-going 'life of debauchery that he had lived, even on Malta'.[305]

At the funeral his Isouard family were accompanied by a large crowd of colleagues and artists, including professors from the *Conservatoire* and fellow composers. Among the mourners were Luigi Cherubini, Breton and the librettist Delrieu.[306] His remains were said to have been buried in Notre Dame, more likely Notre-Dame-des-Victories Basilica on the Île de France, before they were later translated to the Père-Lachaise cemetery.

His final and unfinished opera, *Aladin ou La lampe merveilleuse,* was further composed by Angelo Maria Benincori (1779-1821) and completed by Francois-Antoine Habeneck (1781-1849).[307] The posthumous premiere took place at the Paris Opéra on 6 February 1822. It was an operatic finale to an adventurous and eventful life.

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held in the archives of the convent of San Filippo Neri, Senglea. De Rohan eventually passed away on 13 July, and von Hompesch's election was confirmed on 17 July. The then Grand Prior and Elector of Bavaria, Karl Theodor was the first ruling monarch to write and congratulate von Hompesch. Curiously, it was von Hompesch who appointed the former captain of the port and Jacobin, Antoine Poussielgue to pay his creditors for him after his exile from Malta. AOM, MS, 2096, ff. 67-68.

[303] *Archives de Paris* DQ8 492.

[304] Azzopardi, 85-88. The musical works by the second daughter, Anne are held in F-Pn Ms 12767. Said, *Nicolò Isouard*.

[305] *Ibid.*

[306] The funeral oration by Charles-Guillaume Étienne was published in the Parisian journal *La Minerve Française* and printed in the Malta Government Gazette (Valletta) of 6 May 1818, pp. 1374-75. Étienne was the librettist of Isouard's *Cendrillon* and *La Fête au village* – numbers thirty-one and thirty-three respectively in the Catalogue of Stage Works that accompany this thesis. He was also the co-librettist for the two act opera *Une Nuit de Gustave Wasa*, which is number forty-six in the catalogue.

[307] Habeneck was a superior musician and violinist who succeeded Rodolphe Kreutzer at the Opéra. He conducted the first performances of the operas *Guillaume Tell* of Rossini, Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* and *Benvenuto Cellini* of Hector Berlioz.

Chapter Three

The Complete Sacred Music – A Commentary.

1. The Music and its Sources

> 'In the words themselves (as I have learned from experience) there is such hidden and mysterious power that to a person thinking over divine things, diligently and earnestly turning them over in his mind, the most appropriate measures come, I do not know how, and offer themselves freely to the mind that is neither idle nor inert'.
>
> William Byrd, *Gradualia*, 1605.[1]

This chapter provides an overview of Isouard's surviving/known church music, a body of some thirty-nine works, and some fragments, mainly composed during his early career, and before the age of twenty-six. Most of the music consists of settings of single sections of the Ordinary of the Mass, and diverse psalms and verses from Vespers. In addition, his legacy includes one setting of the *Magnificat*, a *Te Deum*, and large scale *Dixit Dominus*. In the Appendix of this Commentary there is a setting of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* from the Ordinary of the Mass, but this is more likely to be a *Messa di Gloria*. Dated 1790, it is an important manuscript found in Cospicua, on Malta, and one would like to conjecture that it might possibly be attributed to Michel' Angelo Vella, and composed with the young Nicolò Isouard, his student and apprentice in the background. In general, Isouard's sacred works are those of a young composer who had some exposure to both French and Italian sacred and secular music of the time. Some of these works are more than competent, whilst others reflect his interpretation of the changing musical styles that he heard in Paris and Naples. From the contents of his library after his death, we know that Isouard was a keen and enthusiastic observer of the style and the compositions of other musicians of the period.[2]

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[1] Translation adapted from *Gradualia I: The Marian Masses, Byrd Edition* 5, ed. Philip Brett (London: Stainer and Bell, 1989), xxxvi. Cited in Kerry McCarthy, *Liturgy and Contemplation in Byrd's Gradualia* (New York and Oxford: Routledge, 2007), ix.

[2] Azzopardi, 77-80. The Inventory of the property of Isouard, compiled on 6 April 1818 included the *Principes de composition musicale de Nicola Sala, trois volumes*. Paris, Archives Nationales, MC/Et. LXII, n. 825. Nicola

The following commentaries on each work are designed to provide details of provenance, instrumental and vocal resources and stylistic features, as well as any unusual aspects to be found on the manuscripts, such as a positive, or at times presumed dating. Each of the commentaries quotes the name of the work and the layout of the orchestral and vocal forces as they appear on each manuscript. None of these works has been previously published.

The manuscripts of Nicolò Isouard's sacred music are found in three locations in France, whilst the Sinfonia and the important *Messa à Quatro Voci – 1790,* which could be ascribed to Michel' Angelo Vella and with the possible assistance of his pupil Nicolò Isouard, are held on Malta. The majority of the manuscripts are held in the Music Library of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris and are contained in four manuscript volumes listed below. Two fragments of a Requiem are held in Paris. One is in the Musée de L'Opéra, and the other in the Music Auction house of *Les Autographes* (M. Thierry Bodin), at 45 Rue de l'Abbé Grégoire 75006, Paris. One double sided page of sketches, written by Isouard at the age of fourteen is to be found in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, at Yale University and is discussed in Chapter Two.[3] Finally one further important manuscript, in Isouard's hand, is in the Library of the Conservatoire royal de musique in Brussels. It is an arrangement of the *Missa Defunctorum (Missa pro defunctis),* in E flat major by the Italian composer Niccolò Jommelli (1714-1774). This manuscript of 171 pages is a complete re-orchestration of this work by Isouard, one originally composed in 1756 for four-part voices, strings and organ continuo for the royal court of Württemberg.

As can be seen in the commentaries below, Isouard used a number of varieties of his name. There appears to be no particular rhyme or reason for this practice, and it should be seen more in terms of his personality, rather than having any musical or chronological significance. These variants include *Nicolò Isouard Maltese* (cit. *Diffusa est Gratia*), or *Nicolò Isouard Xuereb* (cit. *Nisi Dominus*), or even *Isoüard*. The *Maltese* refers to his birth-place and

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Sala was one of his teachers in Naples. Included in this library were full scores of the great works of Gluck, Salieri, Cherubini and even Mozart's *opera seria, Idomeneo*.

[3] Beinecke Rare Books and MS Library, Yale University, US-NH. Nicolò Isouard Manuscript, Cat. No. Folder 387.

Xuereb to his great-grandmother's Maltese surname. This grouping of the two Maltese surnames is a particularly Maltese tradition. During the Parisian part of his career from 1800 onwards, he was often simply referred to as *Nicolo* (as printed in the full orchestral score of *Joconde*), or *Nicolo de Malte*. In the editions within this thesis of his sacred music, Isouard's name is spelled on the scores of the edition exactly as the composer inscribes it on each individual manuscript.

Apart from the orchestration of the Jommelli Requiem, all of these sacred works by Isouard were composed before he had turned twenty-five years-of-age. Therefore, many of the observations that I make are not as profound as they would be in analysing later works by him, or in commentary on other major and more technically gifted composers. If some of my observations are simplistic, it is because, for much of the time, Isouard's sacred music is equally simple. It is the music of a very young composer, but one who was writing in a period, where musical ideas and style were undergoing change. It was an interesting age, where some composers, including Isouard, were deliberately aiming at a post-classical austerity and simplicity, as seen in the works of André Grétry (1741-1813),[4] Étienne-Nicolas Méhul (1763-1817)[5] and Jean-François Le Sueur (1760-1837)[6].

The manuscripts of Isouard's sacred music are held in the following locations.

Music Library, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

These scores are found in four volumes (MSS 8039, 8113A, 8113B, and 8910) with the reference and catalogue numbers indicated below. The page numbers apply to the two main manuscript volumes that contain multiple works, and the edition number refers to the order in which they appear in the commentaries in this chapter.

Ms 8039

Dixit (Dominus) à 4 voci. Single pages 1-181. Edition nº 6

Ms 8113A

[4]David Charlton, *Grétry and the Growth of opéra-comique* (Cambridge: CUP, 1896).
[5]David Charlton, 'Etienne-Nicolas Méhul', *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie. (London: Macmillan, 1988), vol. 12, 62-67.
[6] Jean Mongrédien, *Jean-François Le Sueur. Catalogue thématique* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1980).

Page	Work title	Edition nº
1	Dixit, Legato	7
18	Virgam virtutis. Duetto Tenor Bass	33
27	Gloria à 4 voci in D major - 1795	10
63	Credo à 4 - 1795	2
92	Kyrie in C minor. Naples - 1797	18
110	Gloria in D major – Cum Sancto Spiritu	12
133	Kyrie – Messa No. 2	19
134	Kyrie in E flat major	16
142	Gratias agimus. Alto solo and oboe obligato in E flat major	14
158	Qui tollis. Soprano solo con Pertichini.	25
178	Quoniam. Bass solo	26
194	Domine Deus in E flat major - Quartetto	9
204	Diffusa est gratia per Gennaro Oliva	5
220	Suscepimus Deus à 8 voci	30
229	Domine Deus in E flat major - Terzetto	8
239	Vexilla Regis	32

Ms 8113B

Page	Work title	Edition nº
1	De torrente. Soprano solo in A flat major	3
11	Motettini per la Settimana Santa	22
25	Gloria Patri in E flat major	13
31	Angelus Domini	1
36	Panis Angelicus	24
47	Virtute Magna	35
57	Lauda Jerusalem	20
61	Nisi Dominus	23
73	Stabat Mater - fragments	29
80	Virgam Virtutis. Tenor solo	34

90	Laetatus sum	21
102	Salve Regina	28
105	Juravit Dominus	15
116	De torrente. Soprano solo in B flat major	4
120	Gloria Patri à 3	11
132	Kyrie à 4 - 1795	17
136	Magnificat à 4	22

Ms 8910

Te Deum -1791. Dedicated to *Commendatore* (later the *Bailli*) Frà Paul-Julien Suffren de St Tropez. Single pages 1-72. Edition nº 31

Further manuscripts are held in the following locations.

Bibliothèque de L'Opéra, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

Requiem Fragment Res 182

Edition in commentary.

'Les Autographes' – Thierry Bodin, Paris

Requiem Fragment: four pages of composer's autograph.

Edition in commentary.

Commissariat of the Holy Land (Order of the Friars Minor – Franciscan Friary) Valletta, Malta.

Sinfonia. (Set of incomplete orchestral parts. No orchestral score).

Edition nº 37

Archives of the Cospicua Collegiate Church (Parish of The Immaculate Conception) Bormla, Malta.

Messa à Quatro Voci - 1790. (Possible attribution to Michel' Angelo Vella and with possible observance by Nicolò Isouard?).

Edition nº 36

Beinecke Library, Yale University.

Sketches, (two pages verso and recto), composed ‘at the age of fourteen years’. These two fragments are of an orchestral ritornello in various clefs, and a short extract, set to the text of Metastasio’s *La Danza*. Gen MSS Music Misc (Folder 387).

Edition in Chapter Two.

Conservatoire royale de musique, Brussels, Belgium.

Missa Defunctorum (Missa pro defunctis). A complete re-orchestration by Isouard of the Requiem Mass in E flat major by Niccolò Jommelli (1756) B-Bc/15,. RISM 705000158.

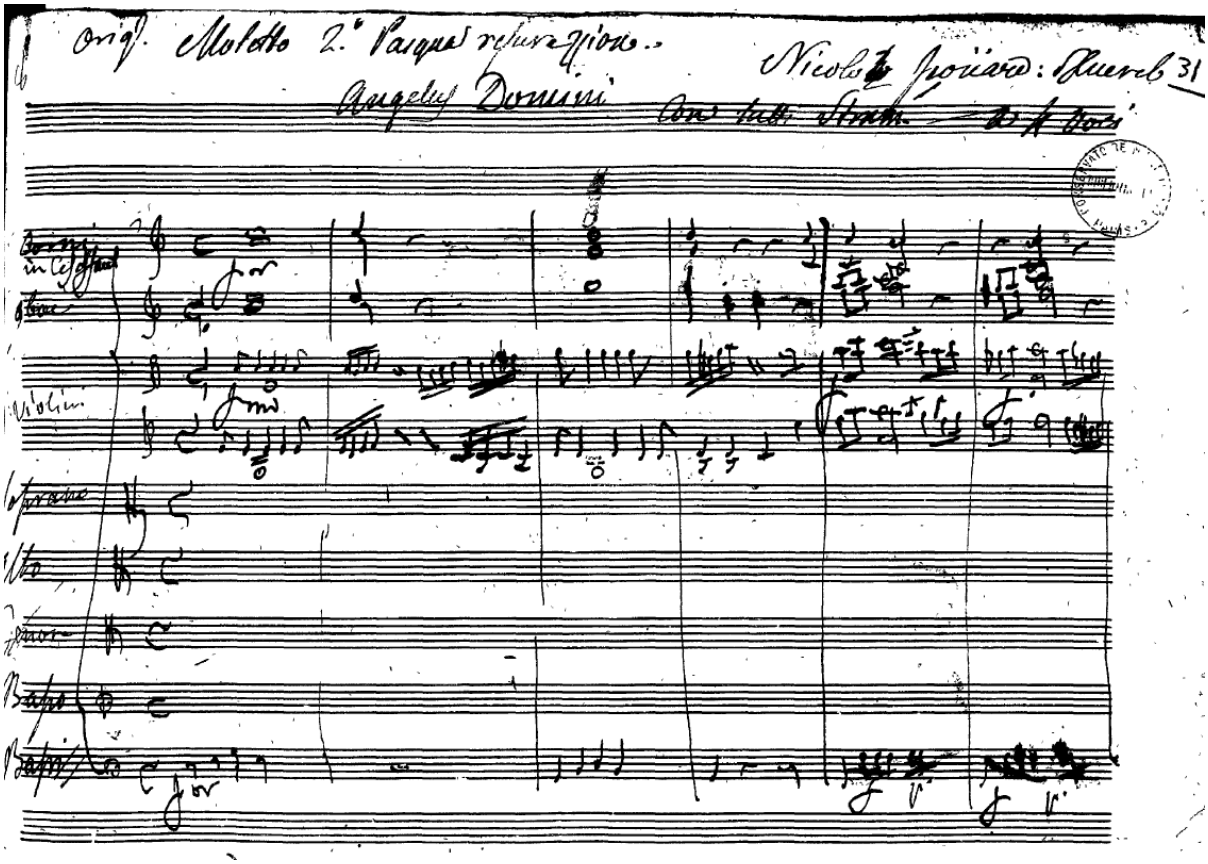
Edition nº 39

2. The Works – A Commentary

The sacred works discussed in the following commentary are listed in alphabetical order, according to the title of the piece. Initially I proposed to list all of these sacred music settings in their appropriate religious compartments, such as placing all of the Mass movements together - similarly with the Antiphons. After reflection, I felt that it would make for easier reference if the alphabetical system were used. Instrumentation cited in the descriptions of the layout of the scores are case sensitive, and are described exactly as Isouard notates them on the manuscript. I have realised the organ continuo part, knowing that in some places organists still do not improvise figure bass notation, and that in some of these scores by Isouard, there are almost no figured bass indications.[7] In some instances Isouard will write *senza organo* for the instrument, but then deliberately add figured bass notation in the *tacet* section. I have therefore included the continuo realisation to all sections above the bass line organ notation. Vocal slurs should be considered to be almost always editorial, for Isouard rarely ever utilised slurs on the voice lines. I have only included the words of less well-known liturgical works where considered appropriate.

[7] This lack of figured bass is typical in Neapolitan scores of the time, where performers with an extensive study of *partimenti* would have needed no such guidance.

1. **Angelus Domini descendit.**



Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text & Liturgical function

The Angelus Domini is a Motet for the octave of Easter and is also used as the Offertory for Mass for the feast of St Mary Magdalen. It is the first responsory for Matins on Easter Sunday, and is taken from St Matthew (28: 2.5.6.). The Latin text set to music is:

Angelus Domini descendit de caelo et dixit mulieribus:
Quem quaerentis, surrexit sicut dixit. Alleluia.

Or in English:

The Angel of the Lord came down from heaven
And said to the women,
He whom you seek has risen, as He said. Alleluia.

The text of this motet was set to music by many composers, especially during the sixteenth century, including such well-known figures as William Byrd (1543-1623), Philippe de Monte (1521-1603), Orlando di Lasso (1532-1594), Jacob Handl (1550-1591) and Hans Leo Hassler (1562-1612), as well as Giuseppe Sarti (1729-1802).[8] Andrea Gabrieli (1510-1586) wrote a version published in 1587, and his nephew, Giovanni Gabrieli (c. 1553-6; d. 1612) set this text in 1597. Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1591) composed a Mass of that name – entitled *Missa Descendit angelus Domini*, posthumously published in 1600. The visitation of the Angel of The Lord, telling the women at the open tomb that, 'He whom you seek has arisen, as he said', is a beautiful and short text. The second line of the text, the *Quem quaerentis* is the customary beginning point of most mediaeval liturgical plays on the Easter theme. The text has a long association with the rejoicing associated with the resurrection mystery. Ending with an *Alleluia*, it lends itself to joyful musical setting.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboes I and II, horns I and II in C, strings and organ continuo, without violas, with soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices. Possibly due to the simplicity of the harmonic structure, and the key, there is no figured bass notation in the entire score.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 31-35.

Title and author as given in the source are:

Motetto 2 Pasqua resurezzione., Angelus Domini con tutti strum[enti] à 4 voci Nicolo Isoüard: Xuereb

The manuscript of nine pages is on hand ruled, twelve stave paper, in landscape format. This is the music manuscript paper that was utilised by Isouard for the majority of the works of this genre, in the period when he was working and composing on Malta. The use of the landscape format paper meant that any work utilising up to twelve lines or less would fit length ways onto a single page, and accommodate at least double the number of bars than portrait format paper.

[8] Variants of the text were set by Hassler and other composers, especially *Angelus enim [autem] Domini descendit de coelo.*

Regarding the composer's name, the use of the diaeresis over the *ü* in Isouard is an unusual, though not an isolated touch by the composer, for he signs his surname in the same manner in the *Lauda Jerusalem* – edition number 20, and in other works. In the title he misspells the Italian for resurrection in adding a double *z* and using only one *r*. The orchestration is listed on the first page in descending order as: Corni I and II in Do, Oboe I and II, Violini I and II, Soprano, Alto, Tenore, Basso and Bassi but without any figured bass notation for the organ.

Commentary

This motet is a charming and brief work in C major. There is little of music painting to amplify the text. However, the words *descendit de caelo [celo],* are accompanied in the second violins and bassi by a rising and then descending series of quavers. The announcement of the angel to the women of *Quem quaeritis surrexit* is sung as a quasi-canon, and with only a gentle string accompaniment. The following *surrexit sicut dixit* is a *subito forte* for the whole ensemble. The opening of the *Alleluia* has a series of semiquaver figures in the two oboes, as if portraying the breathless expectation of the resurrection.

The work, although very short, only 73 bars long, poses two questions. The first is a *Dal Segno* sign (#) at the beginning of bar fourteen and the direction of *Dal Segno subito Dal Segno* after the final bar. But there is no *Fine* indication in the score. Second is that, at the entry of the voices in bar fourteen, there seems to be a Latin text above the soprano one line of the words, *Specie tua et pulchritudine tua*. I have no answer to the above two questions, although the work ends effectively at the final bar (bar 73). It is as though Isouard may have originally intended to have a middle section added to the work, or a *fine* indication at some other point in the score.

2. Credo Leg[ato]. à 4 Voci 1795

Place and date of composition

1795 – probably Malta**.**

Text and Liturgical function

Isouard sets to music the full text of the *Credo* from the Ordinary of the Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Flutes I and II, oboes I and II, bassoons, horns I and II in C, trumpets I and II in C, timpani, harp, soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices, as soloists and chorus, strings with violas, violoncellos and basses with organ continuo. Not included on the title page are divided violas, bassoons and harp.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 63-91.

This work is one of the few in this series that can be dated with certainty - the front cover bearing the inscription *Credo Leg[ato] à 4 Voci Con Tutti Istrumenti, obl[igati], Originale Nicolò Isoüard Maltese Scri[tto per] ord[ine] del G[ran]. M[aestro]. Compost[o]Gen[naio] 1795.*

The work would have been composed either at the direction of, or as a donation to the then Grand Master of The Order of Malta, Frà Emanuel de Rohan-Polduc. Born in La Mancha, Spain in 1725, de Rohan had been elected Grand Master in 1775, succeeding the autocratic Portuguese Frà Francesco Ximines, and he died on 13 July 1797. Some authorities give the date as 14 July 1797.

Grand Master de Rohan is buried in St John's Conventual Church in Valletta, and as Isouard's lordly protector and patron, it is worth giving a translation of the Latin inscription on his

tombstone, (No. 322 in the Conventual Church), for it sums up this Grand Master, who was so important to Isouard, as both patron and prince.

OPTATO PRINCIPI

BENEFICIO EGENTIUM PATRI.....

To a chosen Prince,
his benefaction a father of the destitute,
the Most Eminent Grand Master
Frà Emanuel de Rohan
who
guided the Republic through 21 years,
prudently in times of growth,
tirelessly in times of adversity,
giving new lustre to the Sacred Order
and, in fact, while kingdoms were being overturned,
he obtained the people's
favour for his generosity,
trust with his justice,
affection with his Christian love.
He died on the 13th day of July 1797
at the age of 72.[9]

The first page of the twelve stave manuscript of this *Credo* lists the instrumentation, but with a couple of omissions due to lack of staves on the paper itself. The forces of the work are listed in descending order as: Violini I and II, Flauti I and II, Oboe I and II, Corni I and II in Do, Trombe I and II in Do, Timpani, Soprani, Alti, Tenori, Bassi with Bassi e Organo together on the lowest stave. The four choral lines also serve as the staves for the sections sung by the four soloists, namely soprano, alto, tenor and bass (SATB). Not included in the opening orchestral listings are divided Violas, Fagotti and Arpe.

This short instance of use of the harp by Isouard is the only time in his Maltese period that he uses this instrument, although it appears regularly in his *opéra- comiques* composed in France. Curiously it is a harpist on Malta, who later features in a novel of the period entitled

[9] Dane Munro, *Memento Mori* (Malta: MJ Publications, 2005), vol. 2, 175. It is interesting that the word 'Republic' to describe the Order is deliberately chosen to be included on de Rohan's tombstone. Also there is the reference to 'kingdoms were being overturned', surely referring to the French Revolution, the overthrow of the French Monarchy and the upheavals in Genoa, Lombardy and Venice.

Der Prälat (The Prelate), by the Chancellor of the Grand Priory of Germany, Johann Albrecht von Ittner (1754-1825), then based at the Order's Prince-Priory at Heitersheim.[10] The hero of the book, based possibly on the author himself, joins with the famous geologist and turncoat knight, Frà Déodat de Dolomieu on a tour through Italy and on to Malta.[11]

In this novel set on Malta, the subject becomes known as a musician who plays on the harp, and his playing is recorded as being much appreciated - especially his taking part in concerts with the orchestra of the Grand Master. 'His playing the harp on every Friday in St. John's Cathedral (Conventual Church) became an attraction and the Grand Master rewarded him with precious gifts'.[12] Sadly, no records have been found about the presence of harp players on Malta in the 1790's, or the reason why Isouard decided to include these fragments for harp in one section of the *Credo*.[13]

Commentary

The work is one of the longer musical settings by Isouard, extending to fifty-seven pages of full score. The viola, bassoon and harp lines appear on different staves throughout the score, where apart from occasional solo passages, both the violas and bassoons are generally marked *col bassi*. The choir enters immediately after an introductory orchestral chord, where the repeated opening words of *Credo, credo in unum Deum* are sung in unison, but punctuated by *fermatas*. The violas and bassoons make their first notated appearance in the manuscript at bars ten and fourteen, respectively.

[10] The Prince-Priory of Heitersheim in Baden-Württemberg. In 1548 the Grand Priors were elevated by the Emperor Charles V to hold the rank of Princes of the Holy Roman Emperor.
[11] Frà Déodat-Guy-Sylvain-Tancrède Gratet de Dolomieu (1750-1801).
[12] Thomas Freller, *Verses and Visions – The Maltese Islands in World Literature* (Valletta: Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, 2008), 246-247.
[13] *Et incarnatus est*, bars 120-160. Isouard's teacher Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi included a harp in the orchestration of his azione sacra *Debora e Sisara*, premiered in Naples in 1788. The full score is in the University of Louisville Music Library, US-Loa. The libretto is by the Italian poet Carlo Sernicola, who also wrote a libretto for Pasquale Anfossi, brother of Vincenzo, Isouard's organist colleague at the Conventual Church in Valletta. The harp is one of the instruments included in Monteverdi's Orfeo, and in some countries its use was widsespread. For example in the Spanish Philippines, one singer/instrumentalist in Manila from 1739 was the Augustinian Juan Bolívar (1708-1754), who was 'a proficient player of the harp'. Bolívar has been *vicario del coro* at the San Felipe el Real ion Madrid for eighteen years. Similarly the harp was present in many of the Spanish Amenican colonies where it was utilised to accompany ecclesiastical vocal music. D.R.M.Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint -Music in Early Modern Manila* (Oxford: OUP, 2010), 106-107,171.

Although the tenor and bass soloists are briefly introduced in the *Et in unum Dominum*, the first substantial section for any soloist occurs at the change of key into E flat major in the bass aria *Deum de Deo*, (bar 65) with its attractive flute descants. The text of *per quem omnia* is highlighted by vocal jumps of tenths from low A flat to middle C accompanied by divided violas.

This bass aria is interrupted by *forte* violins with quadruple stoppings and the *forte* entry of the choir to the text of *Qui propter nos homines* - a strong affirmation of the unity of God and Jesus Christ. The change of key from the dramatic C and G minor of the preceding passage is beautifully realised to a dolce A flat major on the text *descendit de caelis.* The *Et incarnatus est* is in the form of a duet between the soprano and the bass soloists, in the tempo direction of *Grave*, with some vocal flourishes at the end of each phrase for the soloists. The harp is introduced in bar 132 and is fairly fragmentary in content.

Although there are no *tutti* or *coro* indications on the choral staves, I assume that the two same soprano and bass soloists begin the dramatic *Crucifixus*. This entry is marked either *sotto voce,* or *sotto voce assai*, and the two voices are joined by the solo alto on the ethereal *passus et sepultus est,* until an appropriate *forte* erupts from the entire orchestral and vocal ensemble on the words *Et resurrexit tertia die.* This very dramatic moment is amplified by a sudden and unexpected modulation into C major.

The four soloists are reintroduced in solo and duetto form at the text *Et in Spiritum Sanctum* followed by the bass soloist in the *Et unam, sanctam, catholicam* in C minor. The *Confiteor unum baptisma* changes affirmatively to the major, and the *Et expecto* is composed firmly over a solid pedal note in the *bassi* on low G. The entire orchestral ensemble and choir return at a new tempo of *Più moto* with two grand *crescendi* on the repeated words *Et vitam venturi saeculi* and the work progresses to the end of the *Credo*. The work resolves and concludes in a triumphal C major *Amen*.

This *Credo* is one of a few works by Isouard edited in a thesis and assembled for a performance on Malta and in Bulgaria by the Maltese musicologist and fine conductor John Galea. Three movements of the Mass, the *Kyrie, Gloria* and *Credo*, under the title of *Messa*

Leggiera were also recorded at the time in Bulgaria and issued on CD.[14] I have not been able to consult this thesis and edition, and have simply worked from the complete manuscript sources that were fully available to me from the Bibliothèque Nationale.

[14] Nicolò Isouard, *Missa Leggiera*, Sofia Symphony Orchestra, Chorus Urbanus and soloists, cond. John Galea, CD MK 6217, 1999. John Galea, 'The *Mass of Isouard*'. D.Mus. thesis, Università degli Studi di Pavia (Cremona, Italy), 2009.

3. De torrente in via bibet – for soprano solo and orchestra in A flat major.

Place and date of composition

Unknown, but possibly composed after 1796.

Text and Liturgical function

This work is one of several in this series that can be described as a *pezzo staccato*, or literally, a short piece. In this case it is a work that is set to music, utilising one line of text, a single verse of the *Dixit Dominus*, (Psalm 109/110: 7). The Latin text is:

De torrente in via bibet; propterea exaltabit caput.

Or in English:

He shall drink of the spring in the way; therefore shall he lift up the head.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe solo and oboe II, horns I and II in E flat, solo soprano and strings with organ continuo but without violas.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 1-10.

Nicolò Isouard composed three settings of this seventh verse of Psalm 109 (110). One of the other two settings, in B flat major is a work that also sets this one verse alone (Ms 8113B, pp. 116-119, No. 4 below), whilst another is contained in the complete setting of the *Dixit Dominus* found in Ms 8039 (No. 7). This particular movement, for solo soprano, with oboe obligato and basso obligato remains in the 3/8 time signature throughout the whole piece and is 306 bars in length. Isouard's second setting of the *De torrente* is also written for soprano soloist in 3/8 time, but in the key of B flat major.

The entire psalm and this verse were popular texts, set to music many times in the baroque and classical period, by composers including Handel, Vivaldi, Antonio Caldara (1670-1736), and Antonio Lotti (1667-1740). It was also set by Mozart in his *Vesperae solennes de*

Confessore, K 339, composed in Salzburg in 1780, as part of the opening movement of the *Dixit Dominus*.

Commentary

The *De torrente* is written on the twelve stave manuscript paper, with two six-staffed systems on each page. On the cover page the score is entitled *De torrente à Soprano solo con Oboe e controbasso obligato. Orig[inale] Nicolo Isoüard.* The layout of the orchestration in descending order on the manuscript is: Violini I and II, Oboe solo and Oboe II on one stave, Corni I and II in Mi flat, also on one single stave, Canto and Basso, with figured bass for the organ continuo. There are no violas in the work, and as there is no tempo indication in the score, I have added a *Larghetto* in parenthesis. The opening statement is for the full orchestral ensemble, with an oboe obligato of 56 bars duration and extensive use of bass pizzicato.

The vocal writing of the piece suggests that it was composed for a *sopranist* (castrato) voice of great limpidity and legato, one with a high tessitura and considerable facility with coloratura. Several of the passages are difficult to sing. The writing for the orchestral ensemble is very fine and suggests that it was written after 1796. The interplay between the oboe soloist and the soprano is very beautiful, with difficult repetitions of demi-semiquaver passages, for both vocal and instrumental soloists.

Despite the text being only one entire line of Latin, the range of expression in both the vocal line, and the interweaving of the oboe obbligato is very well conceived. The overall architecture of the piece is thoughtfully constructed. Although there are numerous pauses throughout the entire movement for possible cadenzas for the vocal soloist, the work leads to a cadenza at the end, with the instruction *Cadenza in Fa maggiore* over the final fermata. The short orchestral postlude suddenly modulates from the F minor into F major for the triumphal final four bars.

4. De torrente in via bibet – for soprano solo and orchestra in B flat major.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

This second setting is a *pezzo staccato* on the same text of *De torrente,* utilising verse seven of Psalm 109(110), which again also reads:
De torrente in via bibet; propterea exaltabit caput.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Clarinet I and II in B flat, horns I and II in E flat, strings without violas, with organ continuo and solo soprano.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 116-119.
The work is in the form of a *Da Capo* aria, but the repeat (or rather *Dal Segno*) starts at the vocal entry in bar 17, thus not utilising the opening orchestral introduction. Isouard writes *Da Capo* but actually means *Dal Segno*. As with the other work of this name, the manuscript paper is ruled with twelve staves, but with this particular work, the lines of each stave seem to be printed or hand-ruled closer together.

The opening page of the manuscript is entitled *de torrente soprano Orig[inale]. Nicolo Isouard*. It is orchestrated for Violins I and II, Clarinets I and II in B flat: (accidentally Isouard has written the key signature for the two clarinets in two flats), Horns I and II in E flat, and tutti Basso and Organ continuo. The layout of the orchestration on this manuscript is listed in descending order on the page as: Violini I and II, Clarinetti I and II, Corni I and II in Mi flat, Canto (soprano), and ending with Basso e Organo.

At this time on Catholic Malta, as elsewhere, female voices were not allowed to sing in Church. Taking this practise into account, it is obvious that the work was written to be sung

by one of the *sopranist* or *musico* - terms used to describe castrati, several of whom who were on the roster of singers at St John's Conventual Church at the time.[15]

These castrati included the singer Gennaro Oliva (Gennarino) who is mentioned in the *Diffusa est Gratia*, which was expressly composed for that *sopranist*. Other castrati at the Conventual Church during the 1790s include Liborio Sant'Angelo who is first mentioned on Malta in 1775, Gaetano Marino (from 1778), the Maltese singer Giuseppe Falzon (1787), and Saverio Pepi (1789). All of the above singers are listed in Bonello and Bruni as having been on the roster of the Conventual Church.[16]

Other castrati were employed at the Cathedral in Mdina, and these included Francesco Cibelli (in Malta from 1778), Agrippino Roselli (1779), Pasquale Arcaro (1780), Michele Marino (1784), Giuseppe Luccherini (1791) and Giuseppe Pezzuolo (1782).[17] Of these names the following castrati employed in Valletta or at Mdina could be excluded as they were alto castrati - namely Falzon, Pepi, Luccherini and Pezzuolo.

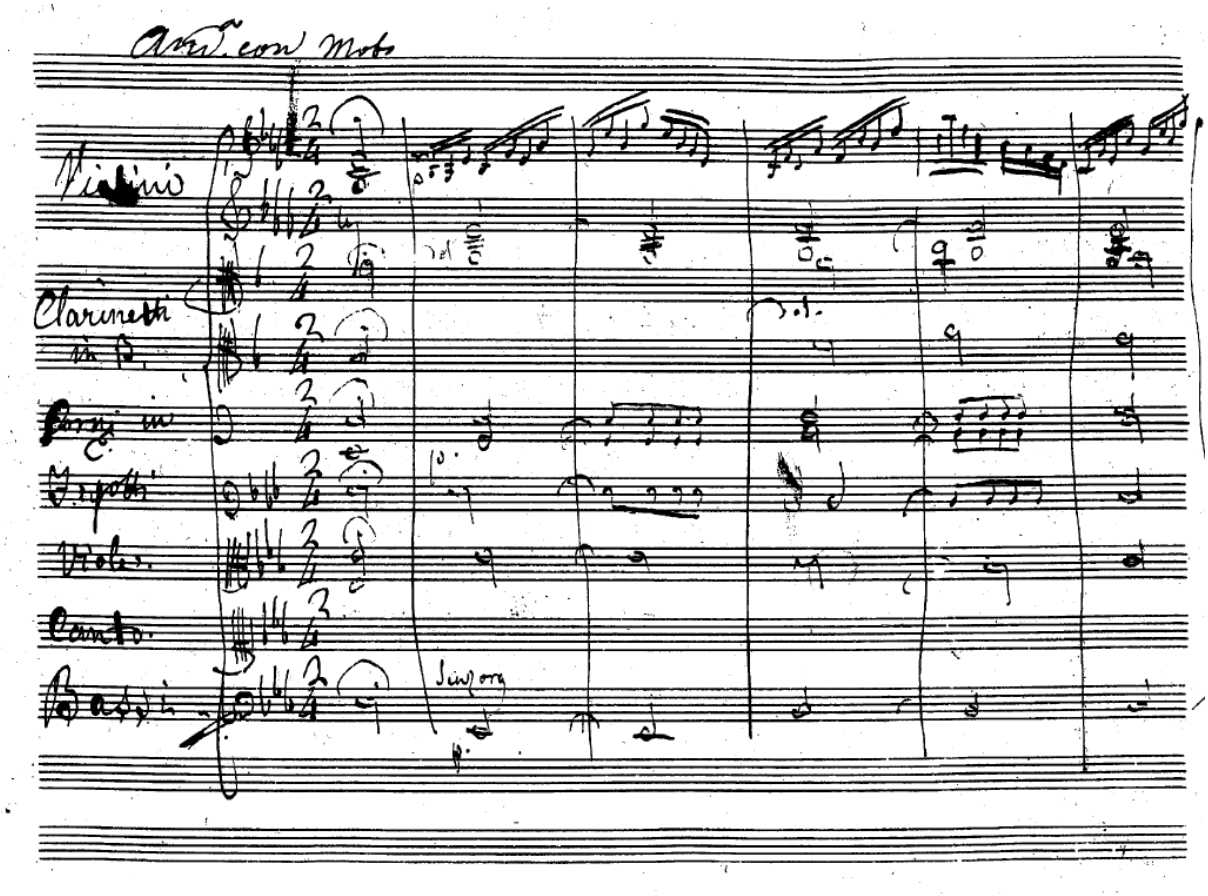
Commentary

The theme in the orchestral introduction that precedes the opening vocal entry and a short contrapuntal passage also appears several times later in the score. The clarinets are featured in long phrased descants, in contrast to the melodic interweaving of the violins and the bassi. As in the *Diffusa est Gratia*, the vocal line has a high tessitura, reaching to B flat, as well as a limited amount of coloratura, although the vocal runs are relatively easy to perform. The vocal range extends from a low D to a high B flat. The middle section is interesting, in that the voice and the principal clarinet engage in an interweaving dialogue, superior to the obbligato part played by the clarinet in the *Diffusa.* This short and pleasant middle section of eighteen bars concludes with a cadenza point for the voice on an F at the top of the stave, leading directly to the *Da Capo (Dal Segno) al Fine*.

[15] The castrati were also referred to by the term *musico*.
[16] Giovanni Bonello, 'The Castrato Singers of St John's,' *Treasures of Malta* 43, Vol. XV, No. 1, (Valletta: Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti, 2008): 13-6.
[17] Franco Bruni, *Musica e Musicista alla Cattedrale di Malta nei secoli XVI-XVII (*Msida, Malta: Malta University Press, 2001), 66 and 292.

This is a short work of some seventy bars, excluding the repeat, and is a charming example of the elegant writing style that Isouard was later to employ in his *opéra-comiques*.

5. Diffusa Est Gratia.



Place and date of composition

There is no date or place of composition on the manuscript, however as it is dedicated to the Malta based castrato, Gennaro Oliva, then the obvious place of composition is Malta.

Text and Liturgical function

The liturgy uses verse three of Psalm 44(45), but with parts omitted on several feasts, namely as an Offertory of the Mass for the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 2 February, which is sometimes known as Candlemas. It is also adopted as the Gradual of the Mass for Mary, the Mother of God, on the 1st of January. In the baroque period it was often used liturgically as a Gradual and Offertory for the Common of a Holy Woman not a Martyr.[18] The words are also used as an antiphon and versicles in the Hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary and in the Mass for Marian Feasts. It is also used as a Gradual (GT

[18] Mauricio Dottori, *The Church Music of Davide Perez and Niccolò Jommelli* (São Paulo: DeArtes-UFPR, 2008), 50.

408.7), an Offertory (GT 421.2), an Antiphon (GT 413.5) and a Communion Antiphon (GT 423.4).[19]

The original text of the psalm in Latin is:

Diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis;
propterea benedixit te Deus in aeternum.
Myrrha, et gutta, et cassia a vestimentis tuis,
a domibus eburneis,
ex quibus te delectaverunt filiae regum in honore tuo.

The liturgy only utilises the first and second lines, adding another line as follows:

Diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis.
Propterea benedixit te Deus in aeternum.
Et in saeculum saeculi.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Clarinets I and II in B flat, bassoon, horns I and II in E flat, strings, including violas with organ continuo, and soprano castrato solo.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 204-219

The cover page of the work is entitled *Diffusa est Gratia, Motetto per Soprano con Clarini, Fagotto, Corni obl[igati], poi Strumenti orig[inale] Nicolò Isouard Maltese. Scritto per uso del Sig[nor]. Gennaro Oliva.* It is written in the key of E flat major on thirty pages of manuscript, including the cover page. In the orchestration listing on page one of the music, the term *Fagotto* on the cover is replaced in the score by the plural *Fagotti*.

The manuscript consists of twelve staves - the top line and the two lowest lines are not utilised. The orchestral layout of the score consists of Violini I and II on the upper two lines, followed in descending order by the Clarinetti I and II on separate staves, two Corni on one stave, Fagotti, Viole, Canto, and a general Bassi line, which includes figured bass notation for the organ continuo. The work is scored for solo soprano castrato and orchestra with organ continuo. The work is 162 bars in duration.

[19] GT. *Graduale Triplex –The Roman Graduale with the additions of Neums from Ancient Mansucripts* (Solesmes: France, 1979)

The *Diffusa est gratia* was composed for the soprano castrato Gennaro Oliva (date of birth and death are unknown), who was a staff singer on the roster of the Conventual Church of The Order of St. John in Valletta. Oliva, known professionally as *Gennarino*, was appointed to the Conventual Church in September 1782 and was still on the salaried roster of singers at the time of the French invasion of Malta in 1798.[20] Neapolitan by birth, Oliva also served in the vocal roster at the Cathedral in Mdina, and his name appears in the records there. In 1784 he was dismissed from the Conventual Church after *coming to blows* with a priest, but was immediately employed at Mdina.[21] Oliva later returned to St John's after petitioning the authorities at the Conventual Church.[22]

Composers who set this psalm to music include Guillaume de Machaut (c.1300-1377), Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, William Byrd, Giovanni Maria Nanino (1543/4-1607), the Spanish composer Francesco Valls (1665-1747), and Michael Haydn. One excellent example of this work was composed in 1751 by Niccolò Jommelli (1714-1774), probably for use in the Church of Santa Maria Dell'Anima, where he was then employed, or even possibly for St Peter's Basilica. It is written for two sopranos and one alto voice with continuo. Jommelli was a composer whom Isouard admired, and he completed a full re-orchestration of that composer's *Missa pro defunctis*.[23] From a perusal of the Mdina Catalogue, neither Isouard's main teacher on Malta, Francesco Azopardi, or Benigno Zerafa, the long serving *maestro di capella* at St Paul's Cathedral in Mdina, wrote any settings of this text. But there is a score by an anonymous composer at the Wignacourt Museum, in Rabat.[24] The initiative for setting these words may have emanated from a personal request from Gennaro Oliva to the composer. Although the entire text is quite short, sections of these three lines are interwoven and repeated by the composer.

The score is divided into several tempo sections - an opening *Andante con moto* of 65 bars of 2/4, and an *Allegro vivo* in 4/4 of 24 bars, which leads into a passage marked *con meno*

[20] AOM 1000, f.21: AOM 1001, f. 21
[21] Bruni, *Musica e Musicista*, 68.
[22] AOM 1194, f. 263.
[23] See Appendix. The Score of the Jommelli *Diffusa est gratia* is held in the Conservatorio di Musica S. Pietro a Majella in Naples. I-Nc/Mus. Re. 965. 4f. See Hochstein, cit., 38-9.
[24] Wignacourt Museum, Rabat, Malta. Ref 67/06 a-b

moto of seventeen bars. The work concludes with a *più moto* section of 56 bars. The vocal range extends to a top B flat and sits generally in the upper part of the tessitura, indicating that Oliva had a castrato voice of high range and flexibility but also of strength. That strength and the virtuosity of his singing are testified by the Conventual Church authorities, who describe him as a *virtuoso.*[25]

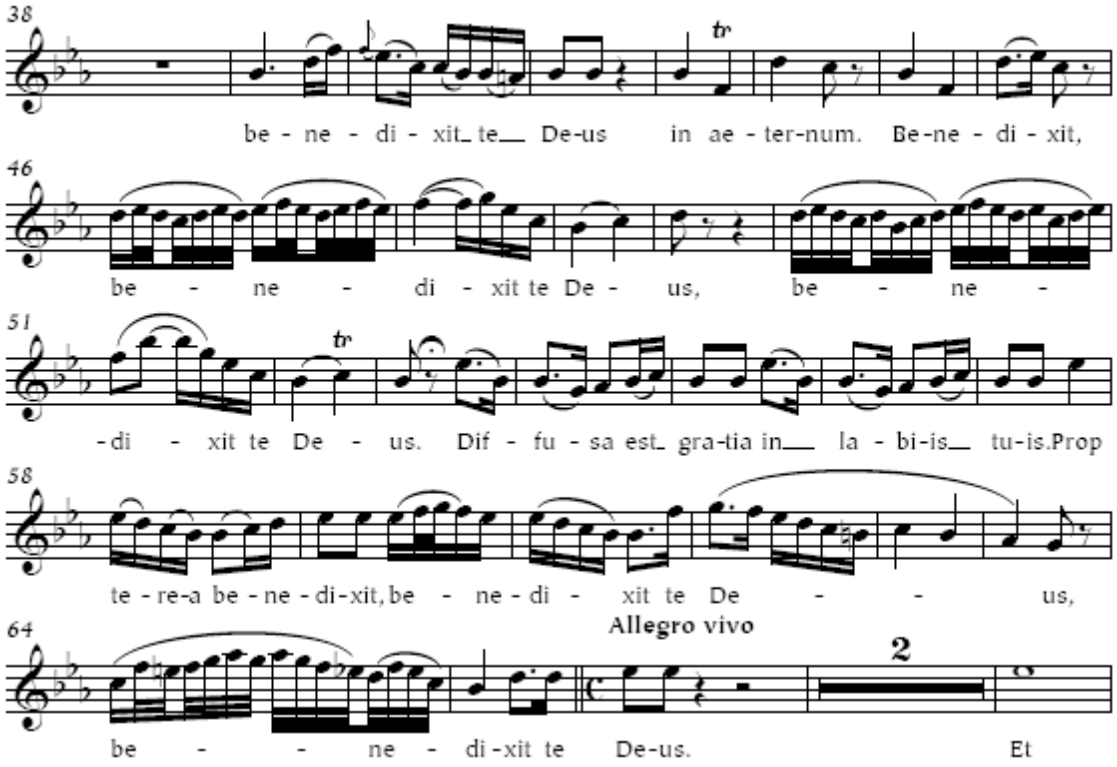
This work is unusual in that, apart from the single solo movement sections of sections of the Mass, it is only one of two major 'stand-alone' sacred works composed by Isouard for solo voice and orchestra. The other work is the large scale setting of *Virgam Virtutis* in C major for solo tenor.

Orchestrally, the work is written with fully independent parts for the clarinets and horns, and also for the string passages, especially in the extended semiquaver passages in the final tempo section, which suggest the musical influence of Ètienne-Nicolas Méhul and André Grétry. The work can possibly be dated on stylistic grounds, as coming from the period after 1795, one where Isouard's arpeggio quaver trademark bass endings are not utilised anywhere in the piece.

Commentary

In the opening *Andante* section, a floating descending phrase appropriately introduces the first mention of the words *in labiis tuis*. The same treatment is given to the word *benedixit* in bars 36 and 40, whilst gentle coloratura is utilised to amplify the meaning of the same latter word (bars 46, 50 and 64). Finally in this section, in the ultimate use of the word *Deus,* a majestic and again floating descending phrase is used.

[25] AOM 1194, f. 328: AOM 658, f. 366-7.



The words *Et in saeculum saeculi* are given strength and firmness in the opening lines of the *Allegro vivo* and an effective use of a cadenza pause provides additional force to these same words (bar 89). The opening text reappears in the *con meno moto* in long 'Haydnesque' melodies in 4/4, and the works ends with soaring phrases reaching to a high B flat with the words *In aeternum.*

6. Dixit Dominus à 4

Place and date of composition

Unknown, but presumably on Malta.

Text and Liturgical function

The *Dixit Dominus*, Psalm 109 (110), is the first of the five psalms sung during Vespers on a Sunday.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Flute I, oboes I and II, (clarinet I and II in B flat), bassoon, horns I and II in E flat, soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices (soloists and chorus) and strings, with violas and organ continuo. There is an *ossia* for clarinets, employed by Isouard in the *Tecum principium*.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8039, pp. 1-181.

This score, a complete setting of the *Dixit Dominus*, Psalm 109 (110), is one of Isouard's longest works. The *Dixit Dominus* is the first of the five psalms sung during Vespers. This manuscript of 181 landscape pages is written on the usual twelve stave paper. It was originally catalogued as manuscript number 3307 in the Conservatoire de Musique Bibliothèque. The cover page reads *Dixit à 4 di. Nicolò Isouard Maltese*, the final word is a reminder that Isouard occasionally makes about his Maltese nationality.

The composer would have been familiar with various Maltese settings of the psalm, for his main teacher and later *maestro di capella* at Mdina Cathedral, Francesco Azopardi composed no less than seven settings of the text between 1787 and 1800. Similarly the previous *maestro di capella* at St Paul's Cathedral in Mdina, Don Benigno Zerafa, composed no less than eight settings of the work, mainly written for the full orchestral ensemble available to him at that cathedral. These settings of Azopardi would have probably been available to Isouard. On the other hand, Zerafa's music was often withheld from view by the

author, possibly because of his humility as a professed religious.[26] One other outstanding Maltese setting of the *Dixit Dominus* comes from the hand of Girolamo Abos, who composed a full setting of this Vespers psalm in 1758.[27] This work, held in the music library of Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, is scored for the Neapolitan voice grouping of five soloists, including two sopranos, and five- part choir; forces that Isouard utilised in his *Te Deum* of 1791. One hundred and eight pages long and scored for two oboes and horns, with strings and organ continuo, this mature work is a fine example of Abos late period of composition, written two years before his death in 1760.

I would suggest that this work by Isouard comes from the very late period of composer's time on Malta, a decision based on features of the orchestration and compositional structure. There may be a reason that he signs his name with the final word *Maltese,* and that could be because of the growing tension with the French prior to the invasion in 1798. It is only a suspicion, but then again Isouard was always an opportunist.

The first page of the music lists the orchestral and vocal forces in this descending order: Violini I and II, Viole, Flauto, Oboe I and II, Corni I and II in E flat, soprano, alto, tenor and bass clefs for the unnamed vocal lines and Bassi. There is no mention of clarinetti or fagotti on the cover page.

The work is in 8 movements and they are:

1. *Dixit Dominus*. SATB Choir. 181 bars in length.
2. *Donec ponam*. Trio for solo alto, tenor and bass. 100 bars in length.
3. *Virgam virtutis.* Soprano solo and SATB choir. 106 bars in length.
4. *Tecum principium*. Tenor solo. 66 bars in length.
5. *Juravit Dominus*. Tenor solo. 73 bars in length.
6. *Dominus a dextris*. Duet for Bass I and II. 230 bars in length.
7. *De torrente*. Alto [but really a soprano] solo. 78 bars in length.

[26] Dun Gwann Azzopardi, in conversation, 2012, Rabat. Zerafa's brother, the organist Frà Giovanni Battista Zerafa and who was a professed religious was allowed to play from Zerafa's manuscripts.
[27] F-Pn. MS-1967.

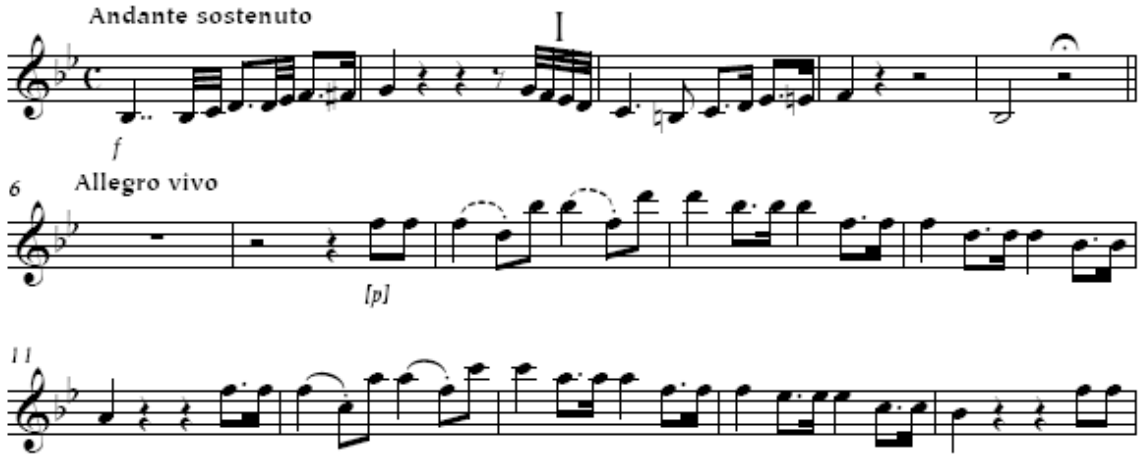
8. *Sicut erat in principio*. SATB Choir. 110 bars in length.

One movement is not included in the manuscript and that is the beginning of the lesser Doxology, the *Gloria Patri*. The *De torrente* goes directly segue into the *Sicut erat*, despite there being a performance instruction in the manuscript which reads, *Siegue Gloria Patri*. Isouard composed one separate *Gloria Patri* (Ms 8113B, pp. 25-30), which is a soprano solo with an orchestral ensemble including two clarinets. These instruments do not feature anywhere else in this *Dixit Dominus,* except as an *ossia* for the oboes in the *Tecum principium*.

The work is scored for a four-part choir, (SATB) and five soloists - soprano, alto, tenor, and bass I and II. The orchestration includes two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, bassoon, two two horns, violin I and II, viola, and tutti bassi with organ continuo. The second flute only plays in the sixth movement, *Dominus a dextris tuis*. This is a movement where the 2 oboes are tacet, suggesting that one, or both of the oboe players doubled as a flautist on occasions. The bassoon part has been added as an *ad libitum* for much of the work, and scored so that it only plays with the woodwinds and horns. However, there is a bassoon solo*,* as well as the alternative for clarinets, employed by Isouard in the *Tecum principium*.

Commentary

The *Dixit Dominus* opens with a short five bar introduction in *Andante sostenuto*, which after a *fermata* leads directly into an *Allegro vivo*. This new tempo provides the thematic material that dominates the entire movement, all of the essential materials being played before the choir enters in bar 15.



Each vocal line then enters with a long series of slurred semibreves, including a first entry for the chorus tenors, 'cruelly' placed to begin on G above the stave, and obviously to be sung *piano*. Dynamic effect is heightened by the use of the organ to strengthen the sound in the *forte* passages. In the score Isouard makes many references to *organo chiuso* and *organo aperto* - the *Allegro* itself begins with the direction marking of *senza organo*. Although Isouard was an experienced organist, there are no indications or instructions in any of his sacred works concerning organ stops or registration that he preferred. These dynamic contrasts are heightened by the use of long vocal legato phrases, together with a contrasting busy orchestral accompaniment. After a pause at bar 84 the piece suddenly modulates into A flat major and then to E flat minor, before the first thematic material returns (bar 113). The movement concludes with the woodwinds echoing the movement in the tutti bassi - a felicitous touch by Isouard.

The *Donec ponam* introduces a pastoral element that often features in Isouard's later operatic writing. The vocal lines of the trio of soloists (alto, tenor and bass) are echoed by flute and oboe solos. This pastoral quality is amplified by the use of fifths in the tutti bassi line (beginning at bar 36). The musical maturity of the overall work is a clue that may assist in dating the work to Isouard's later period on Malta. This charming trio is one of the most gentle and lilting movements in all of the composer's sacred music.

The *ripieno*, *Virgam virtutis* returns to an Allegro in B flat major – which, following an orchestral prelude, leads directly into a passage for solo soprano. There are no solo or tutti indications for the voices in this movement, but the composer's intentions are obvious from

the vocal writing. After a pause, the thematic material changes on the text *Dominare in medio*, where a lilting figure begins in the unison violins, accompanied by divided viola semibreves. The choir joins in bar 4, repeating the opening words of the verse, before the solo soprano returns in another repeated affirmation of the text. The movement concludes utilising the full choral and orchestral forces of the work.

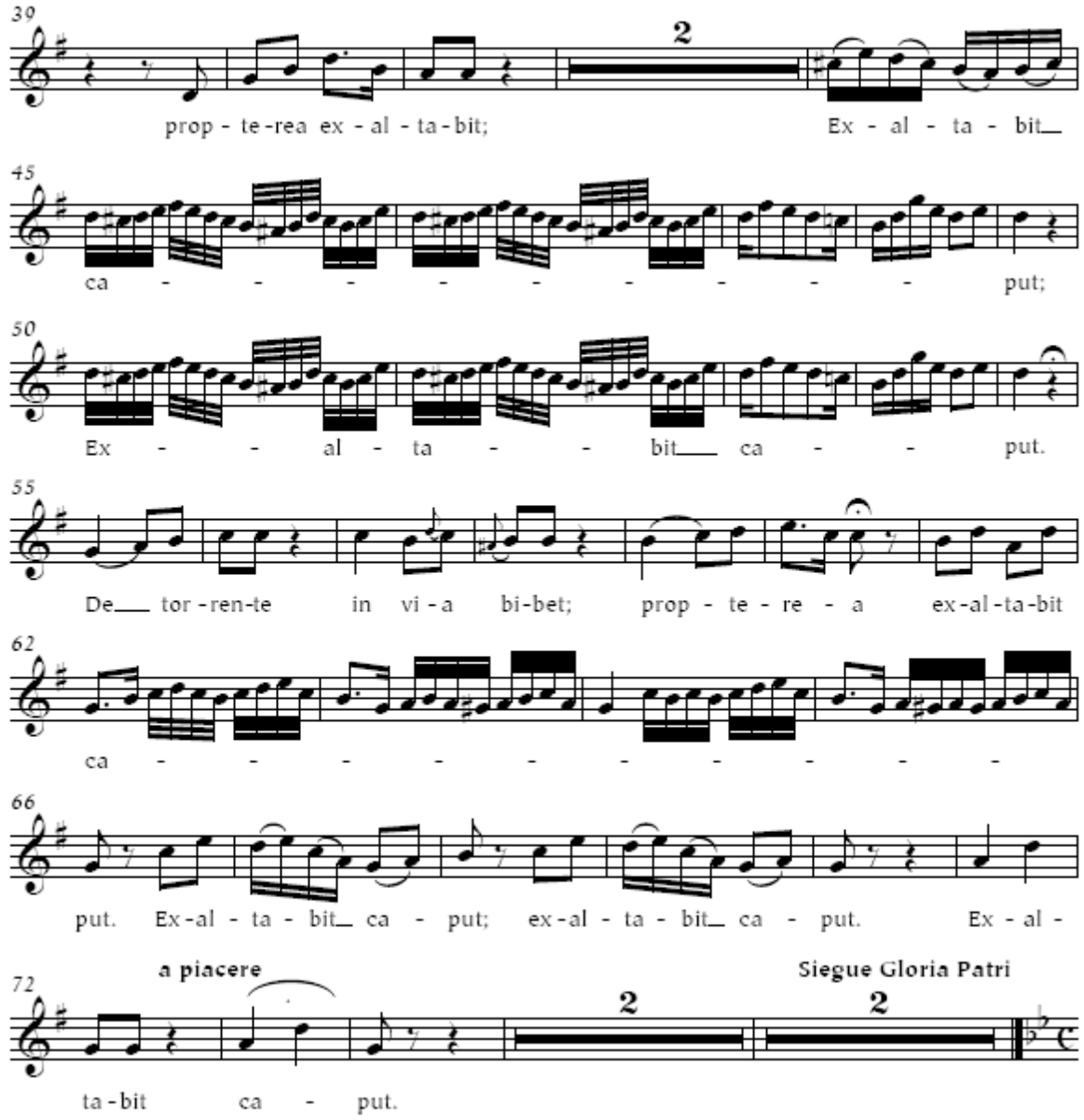
Two clarinets (written in C) and a bassoon solo are 'officially' introduced into the work, in the tenor aria *Tecum principium*. Isouard notes that both the clarinet parts can be replaced by two oboes if needed. The expansive opening orchestral passage of twenty-four bars (*Largo*) is melodically beautiful, with woodwind tracery being interwoven with triplets in the horns and violins. The writing for the tenor solo is both noble and majestic. After the opening phrases the voice soars to the top A flat on the word *splendoribus* and at the text *Ex utero,* the accompaniment and the voice take on a dramatic and rhythmic phase that extends to a top B flat in the vocal line. The aria ends on a quiet and contemplative note, which leads directly into the fifth movement, the *Juravit Dominus*, again another aria for the solo tenor.[28] The effect is of the romantic operatic device of a solo *cavatina* followed by a *cabaletta*, with the voice entering as early as bar 2 of the new *Allegro* tempo.

The following duet for two basses is amongst Isouard's grandest works in sacred music. The *Dominus a dextris tuis* is a substantial 230 bars in duration, written for two voices, and within a vocal range that goes from the bottom of the stave to top F's. It is a grand bravura piece of theatrical writing and an affirmative work, descriptive of the strength of the text. The opening orchestral prelude is twenty-five bars long and outlines the thematic material that is repeated on each entry of the two bass voices. Each bass soloist has a similar opening solo of twenty-four bars, punctuated by fanfare like phrases from double flutes and horns, before they join together in ensemble as a true duet. There are elements of canonic interplay and interweaving in the two vocal lines that show Isouard at his impressive best as the young composer. In the second half of the duet, there is a long but effectively drawn out crescendo which builds to a vocal and orchestral climax at the end of the movement. This is an impressive and dramatic piece of music.

[28] Isouard also sets the text of the *Juravit Dominus* for choir and orchestra. Edition 15 in this Commentary.

The *De torrente* that follows the duet (movement seven) is not the equal of the other two distinct works by Isouard that utilise this same text. I am puzzled that Isouard, having composed two other versions of this text, was not similarly inspired in this third setting. Composed for solo alto, though written in the soprano clef, the aria is scored only for strings with organ continuo. But it is not without its charm and simplicity. That essence may be what Isouard was trying to achieve with this setting of a simple vocal line - one accompanied by evocative writing for the strings. There is musical imagery in the violins, where the moving repeated semiquavers on sevenths and eighths, possibly represent the drinking or lapping of the water in the stream in the text, whilst the use of a trill on the word *torrente* evokes fluidity. Isouard also pens the rare string technique, in sacred music of the time, of *sul ponticello* in the violin II, viola and bass lines (bar 20).

The fact that the vocal line goes beyond the tessitura of the alto voice is confirmed in the *coloratura* writing in bars 44-46 and 50-53, where limpid demisemiquavers amplify the text *exaltabit caput* in the middle section of the aria.



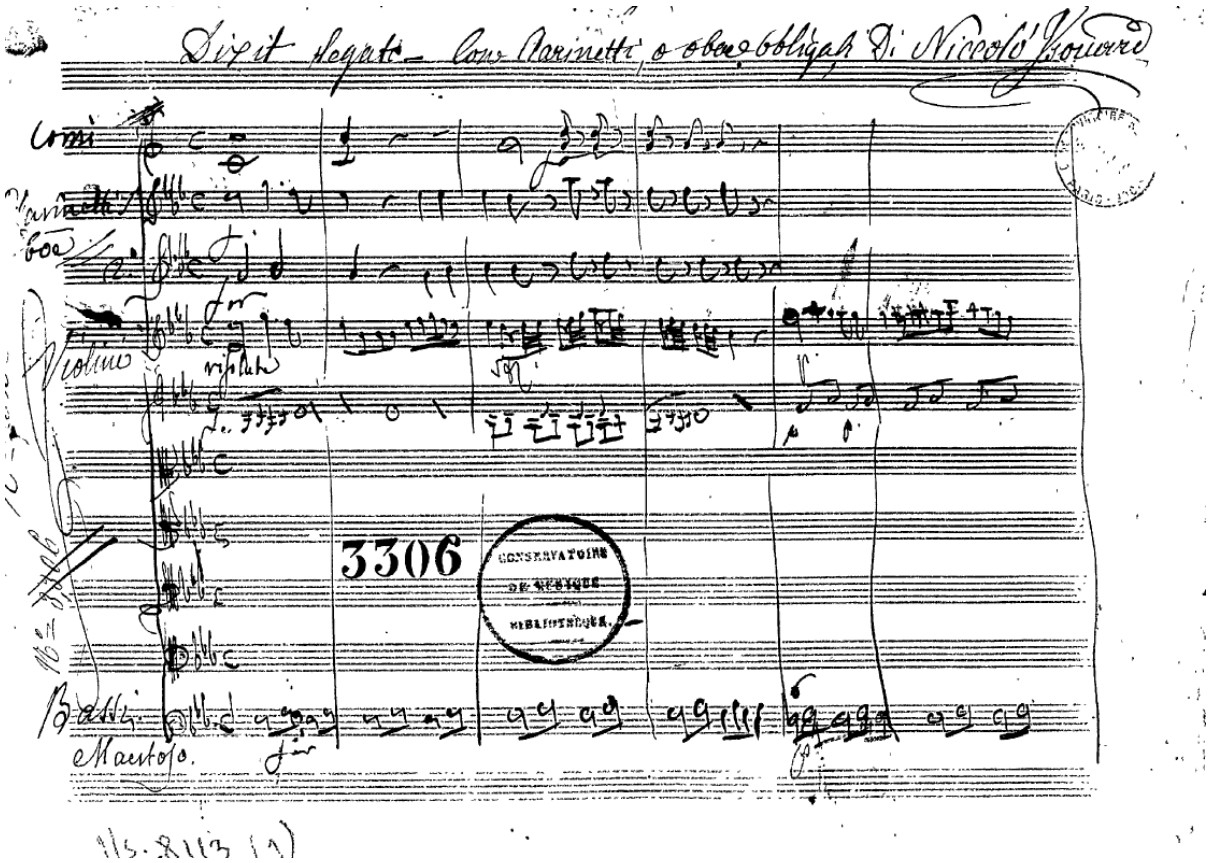
The original vocal theme returns after a pause in bar 55, and the work ends lullaby like, on a gentle cadenza point for the soloist - the accompaniment coming to an equally gentle conclusion. The end of the aria has the previously noted indication of *Siegue Gloria Patri.*[29] The spelling of *siegue* for the Italian *segue* is a particularly Southern Italian and Maltese tradition, being present in the scores of Girolamo Abos (1715-1760), Francesco Azopardi, Pietro Paolo Bugeja (1772-1828), and Benigno Zerafa.

In the noted absence of the *Gloria Patri,* the manuscript recommences with the *Sicut erat in principio*. This final section of the manuscript that runs from pages 170 to 180 is partly in the

[29] Isouard MS, 168.

form of a *spartitini*. That is a part score containing only the vocal lines, but utilising the accompaniment of the first movement from bar 6 onwards. This was quite a normal practice of the period, used by Rossini, Donizetti and even Verdi in their operas prior to 1850. Detailed full orchestration recommences on the manuscript from bar 80, *et in saecula* (ms page 75). Bar 94 to the end of bar 100 are designated *come dal segno* in the manuscript, but I have written this out fully in the edition.

7. Dixit Dominus – Legato.



Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

The text set to music is only the first verse of the Psalm *Dixit Dominus* (Psalm 109/110), the first psalm of Vespers. It was also used for all feast days at Vespers, possibly followed by other *pezzi staccati* in the same collection.

The Latin words utilised in this setting are:

Dixit Dominus Domino meo:
Sede a dextris meis,
donec ponam inimicos tuos
scabellum pedum tuorum.

Or in English:

The Lord said unto my Lord:
Sit thou on my right hand,
until I make thine enemies
thy foot-stool.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, clarinets I and II in B flat, horns I and II in E flat, soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices, and strings and organ continuo, but without violas.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 1-17.

This short work of 241 bars duration and in one movement form is written on thirty-three pages of landscape manuscript paper, of the smaller lined variety. In style it is possibly similar to the two *Dixit Dominus breve* composed by Benigno Zerafa, or the smaller settings by Francesco Azopardi composed from 1772.

The cover page of the works reads *Dixit Legato – con Clarinetti o e oboe obligati, Di Nicolò Isouard*. The listing of the orchestral and vocal forces on the manuscript is, in descending order: Corni I and II in Mi flat, Clarinetti e Oboe I and II, Violini I and II, soprano, alto, tenor and bass clefs for the voices with Tutti Bassi and organ continuo.

This is an interesting score, for Isouard drew the materials for much of the work from his unfinished *Sicut Erat in Principio* that is attached to the *Gloria Patri* in E flat major. This score was composed more likely for Grand Master Emmanuel de Rohan or (less so), for Ferdinand von Hompesch. Frà Ferdinand, the last Grand Master to rule on Malta, succeeded de Rohan on 17 July, 1797. A full comparison between these two movements will be made in the commentary on the *Gloria Patri*. It is a well composed and well constructed work, one that has interesting contrapuntal and harmonic individuality. The vocal lines are lyrically and sensibly written, especially with regard to the tessitura of the soloists. However, there are almost no solo or tutti indications in the manuscript, leaving it up to the performer to decide what is composed for solo voice, or which passages were intended to be sung by the chorus? This is a problematic and common occurrence in Isouard's sacred music.

There is considerable chromatic movement in the work, and it is one of the finer works in this series of sacred music. In the orchestration itself, although the work calls for clarinets and/or oboes, this is not clear from the title or the list of instrumentation on the opening

page. However in bars 24 and also in 28, there is a clear manuscript indication of both oboes and clarinet parts on four distinct staves of the manuscript.

Commentary

The orchestral *maestoso* introduction is no less than thirty-five bars length, and expounds the thematic material that also follows in the choral section. With this opening section ending on a pause, a new direction is taken with the soprano and alto (soloists?), singing a series of phrases of quavers in parallel thirds and sixths, echoed by the woodwinds. This passage could easily step out of a finale movement of an *opera buffa* by either Giovanni Paisiello,[30] or Domenico Cimarosa.[31] From his studies in Naples, Isouard would have been thoroughly familiar with the style and works of these two composers. These particular passages are a prophetic look to the forthcoming world of the *opéra-comique*, which Isouard would dominate for so many years in Paris, until the fall of his patrons, the Bonaparte family.

After a solid reiteration of choral counterpoint, a canonic invention is introduced on the text *Sede a dextris* which leads into a formal statement from the choir in B flat minor, then D flat major, where the opening vocal theme is joyfully alternated between the various individual vocal lines.

The return of the words *Dixit Dominus,* for the first time since the beginning of the piece is accompanied by rapid semiquaver arpeggios on the violins. The duetto theme sung in third's and sixth's returns, leading to a *sturm und drang forte* declaration from the choir of the *Dixit Domino*, accompanied by quadruple stoppings by the first violins - so reminiscent of other passages in Isouard's oeuvre. This, in good operatic style, leads to the triumphant finale of the work.

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[30] Giovanni Paisiello (1740-1816), Neapolitan composer of over ninety operas, including the first *Il Barbiere di Siviglia,* also composed by Isouard and Rossini. There is an attribution to Paisiello, of an opera *pasticcio* on the discovery of the Pacific Ocean, entitled *Cook, ossia L'Inglese in Otahaiti.* The libretto was by Ranieri de' Calzabigi (1714-1795), the librettist of Gluck's Orfeo and Alceste. Amongst Paisiello's sacred compositions there are several settings of the psalm *Dixit Dominus*.

[31] Domenico Cimarosa (1749-1801), Neapolitan composer, who like his rival Paisiello, was a *maestro di capella* for the Russian Empress Catherine II. Cimarosa composed toward one hundred operas – his most enduring work being *Il matrimonio segreto*, written in 1792 for Vienna. He composed seven oratorios or *actio sacra*, and considerable sacred music including two settings of the *Dixit Dominus*.

8. Domine Deus à Terzetto in B flat major.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

This setting of the *Domine Deus* is another *pezzo staccato*. The Latin text is a brief section taken from the *Gloria* of the Ordinary of the Mass. The text in this setting is:

Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.
Domini Fili unigenite, Jesu Christe.
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, bassoon, horns I and II in B flat, strings with viola and organ continuo, and soprano, alto and tenor voices.

The source

F-Pn Ms 8113A, pp. 229-238.

This separate setting of the *Domine Deus* from the Mass is one of two composed by Isouard, the other being a quartet in E flat major and listed after this entry. The work is written on the usual twelve stave landscape format paper and is nineteen pages in length. The cover page is entitled *Domine à Terzetto con oboe solo. Tenore, Alto, Soprani Nicolo Isouard.* The list of orchestral forces, in descending order on the manuscript, is listed as Corni I and II in Befa (in B flat), Oboe Solo and Oboe II, Violini I and II, Fagotto. (The latter word has been deleted in ink). But as that stave is musically written in the alto clef, then a viola line in the music is meant. There follows the Soprano, Alto, Tenore vocal lines and Tutti Bassi with Organ continuo.

This short work of 134 bars duration, is one of Isouard's finest in this genre, and probably dates from his later period on Malta. It is architecturally well constructed and with felicitous touches of melodic invention, as though the composer was quite familiar with the sacred

music of both Haydn and Mozart. I might add that none of the sacred music of these two composers has been found in eighteenth-century manuscripts in Maltese Archives.

Commentary

After a brief three bar chordal prelude, the solo oboe introduces the melodic theme which is then taken up by the soloists at the beginning. Curiously, the principal oboe line also appears as the first voice in bars 4-9 on the Violin I line. This was a practice that was often carried out when the principal violin of the early nineteenth-century often doubled as the conductor. The soloists repeat the opening oboe melody one after the other, commencing with the soprano and then the alto, before joining together in running thirds or sixths.

There follows one of Isouard's joyful interplays of coloratura between these two voices, which leads to a fermata (but not a cadenza pause for the voices), after which the same coloratura passage is repeated. This section calls for professionally agile voices and obviously written for soprano and contralto castrati. It is not until bar 60 that the tenor soloist enters, modulating to a melodic passage in D flat major over syncopated violins. Interweaving the *Domine Deus* text with the *Rex caelestis,* the three voices combine in a canonic interplay with the two oboes providing a floating descant.

After a fermata, a new tempo of *più moto* introduces a gradual crescendo passage over a B flat pedal in the bass, to gently phrased thirds on the text *Filius Patris* - a passage that is partly repeated after a non-cadenza pause. After two stentorian arpeggios to the top B flat for the tenor, the work concludes with all of the voices and orchestra combined on a triumphantly repeated *Filius Patris*. This short work is one of Isouard's finest compositions in the genre of sacred music.

9. Domine Deus – Quartetto in E flat major.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

This setting is of the *Domine Deus* is taken from the *Gloria* of the Ordinary of the Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboes I and II, clarinets I and II, horns I and II in E flat, strings without violas, and organ continuo. The voice parts are for soprano, alto, tenor and bass.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 194-203.

This, the second of two settings as a *pezzo staccato* of the *Domine Deus* in this series, is equally as fine a work as the first. It uses exactly the same text setting as in the previous work. Simply entitled *Domine Deus Quartetto*, the manuscript does not even include the composer's name, although the holograph is in Isouard's hand, and can be securely ascribed to be in the style of this composer. The manuscript is only eighteen pages long, again composed on the twelve stave landscape format paper.

On the first page of the work the forces are listed in descending order as: Violini I and II, Oboe and Clarinetti I and II (written on the same shared staves) Corni I and II in E flat (in this case written as E flat and not as Mi flat), Soprano, Alto, Tenore, Basso with a general Bassi line that includes the Organ continuo with figured bass. For vocal and stylistic reasons, I would suggest that the work is written for four solo singers and not for a choral ensemble. It is a short work of some 137 bars in length, but differs from the first *Domine Deus* in that it has a *Dal Segno al Fine* marking at the end of the piece and a *Fine* marking at bar 98.

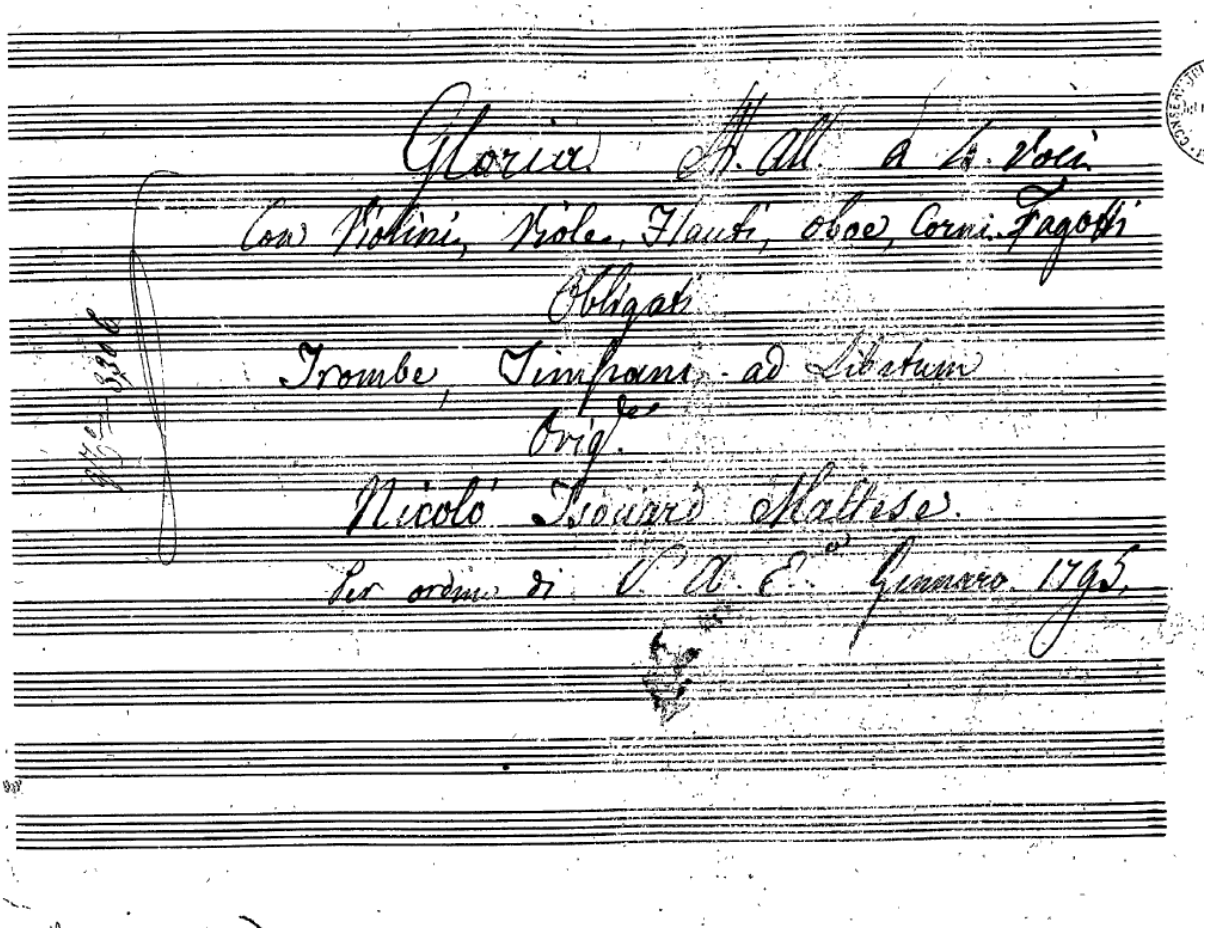
Commentary

The orchestral introduction, with its typical semiquaver bassi line outlines the following melodic material that is taken up by the tenor, alto and the soprano soloists, in that order.

The entry of the bass soloist at bar 41 begins a gradual *crescendo* in dynamics and tension, that is characterised by scales sung by pairs of the voices, covering a range of an octave, and then by vocal syncopations that climax at bar 70 with a *fermata*. This pause bar is an interesting one, in that it is written as a full bar pause, but one with vocal movement within the bar itself, thus indicating that the vocal movement or improvisation had to be done as a cadential point over the entire bar. This style of vocal cadential pause bar was constantly employed by Italian composers from early Rossini to early Verdi.

The words *Filius Patris* are used in the vocal lines in separated quaver ejaculations, accompanied by a dotted figure in the violins above, possibly to emphasise the 'apprehension and awe' present in our devotion to the prayerful message of the text. This is then followed by an 'affirmation' in ascending and then descending scales from the soprano and tenor soloists. This passage, which is immediately repeated, reaches to a top C in the soprano part. After a few bars, the middle section of the work returns to a recapitulation of the melodic theme first heard at the beginning. This is followed by further interplay of the vocal lines and some contrapuntal movement from the vocal parts. The *Dal Segno* is reached after ascending scales from the soprano and the tenor lines to top B flats. The *Dal Segno* marking returns to the bar containing the first vocal entry at bar 17, continuing through to the *Fine* sign in bar 98.

10. Gloria à 4 Voci in D major.



Place and date of composition.

The work was composed in 1795, a date written on the title page, and because of the dedication, probably on Malta.

Text and Liturgical function

The work is a full setting of the *Gloria* from the Ordinary of the Mass. The complete text of the *Gloria in excelsis Deo* is set by the composer.

Instrumental/vocal forces.

This richly scored work calls for two flutes and oboes, two bassoons, two horns and two trumpets in D, and timpani, with strings including violas and organ continuo. Additional to this is a full chorus and four soloists – soprano, alto, tenor and bass.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 27-62.

Title and author as given in the source:

Gloria. Al Alt[aris]. A 4 voci
Con Violini, Viole, Flauti, Oboe, Corni, Fagotti Obligati
Trombe, Timpani ad libitum
Orig[ina]le.
Nicolò Isouard Maltese
Per ordine di S[ua] A[ltezza] E[minentissim]a. Gennaro 1795.

This large-scale movement, one of Isouard's finest examples in this genre, is written on the twelve stave manuscript paper. The majority of the work is neatly written on the page, although in the *Qui tollis* sections, for soprano solo, the work shows signs of haste in the actual notation on the page. The layout of the orchestration and voices is written in this descending order: Violini I and II, Flauti I and II, Oboe I and II, Corni I and II in Re, Trombe I and II in Re, but written in Do, and Timpani in Do. Then follows the vocal lines of Soprani, Alti, Tenori and Bassi, with the viola lines often notated on the vocal bass line or on the trumpet stave. When both trumpets and the bass voice are notated, the violas revert to a *col basso* notation. Finally, on the lowest stave there are the *tutti bassi* lines, which are generally, though not exclusively used for the cellos and basses, but also with the Fagotti and the Organ continuo. The solo voice lines share the chorus voice lines. Unusually for Isouard, the bassoons and violas are occasionally divided in thirds or sixths, rather than being embedded in the *tutti bassi* line, and there are passages for violoncellos, with no contrabass notation.

This work is one of Isouard's finest in this series, and was a major contribution to his folio of works being prepared for consideration by the Grand Master and the Grand Prior of the Conventual Church. These were works that were hoped to bring to fruition, the composer's ambition in succeeding the long-term incumbent music director, Melchiore Sammartin, as *Maestro di Capella* of the music establishment at St John's.

Commentary

The opening *Gloria* begins with one of Isouard's characteristic crescendo passages, that utilises both chorus and the entire orchestra. They are joined by pairs of soprano and alto voices accompanied by the two oboes, and the tenor and bass soloists, accompanied by

divided violas. This use of pairs of vocal soloists is present on several occasions throughout the work, including in the beginning of the *Et in terra pax*. On the word *pax,* the composer utilises pianissimo passages for the voices, strings and woodwinds. The *Laudamus te* changes the celebratory mood with a change of key to F major, with a solo for the alto, accompanied by an obligato flute. The *Domine Deus* is a dramatic and well written *sturm und drang* aria in the key of D minor for solo bass, and is a movement which contains some interesting chromatic passages for both the voice and orchestra. This is followed by an introduction to the first *Qui tollis*, where divided flutes and violas provide an attractive prelude to the solo soprano entry, leading to a reverential *miserere nobis* from the four solo vocal lines. Isouard provides no indications of directions for the singers from bar 237 to bar 248, and it is left up to the performer to decide if this short passage is sung by the soloists or the chorus. The repetition of the two *Qui tollis* lines leads into a vocal quartet for the soloists, and the *Quoniam tu solus Sanctus,* where two pairs of the voices interweave the text – the tenor soloist ascending a scale to a top D. In this section Isouard writes the tenor vocal line on the alto stave. In bar 335-6 the composer adds an alternative line for the soprano solo, and I have chosen the *ossia* that is written in minims, as being Isouard's final intentions. The *Cum Sancto Spiritu* reverts to the dominant D major with a return to the opening music material and the full orchestral resources, and using the solo soprano and tenor voices in duet passages, the work resolves to a triumphal conclusion.

11. Gloria Patri à 3, S.A.E. in E flat major.

Place and date of composition

The date of the work is unknown, but the dedication to S.A.E., namely the abbreviation for the title of Grand Master, means that it was probably composed on Malta.

Text and Liturgical function

The text of the work is the simple doxology that the liturgy adds to each psalm during Vespers. It reads:

Gloria Patri, et Filio,
et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,
et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Or in English:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboes I and I, clarinets I and II in C, horns I and II in E flat, strings and organ continuo, but without violas, and soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 120-131.

The *Gloria Patri* is a work in two distinct sections. The Gloria starts on page 120 of Ms 8113B and ends on page 123b. The *Sicut Erat* begins on the immediate following page (p.124), and concludes on p. 131. The *Gloria* is 48 bars long and the following *Sicut erat* 100 bars.

The title on the first page of the manuscript reads *Gloria Patri à 3. S[ua]. A[ltezza]. E[minentissima]. Orig[inale] Nicolò Isouard*. The instrumental and vocal forces are listed in descending order on the title page as: Violini I and II, Oboe o Clarinetti (I and II), Corni I and II in E flat, Soprano, Alto, Tenore (with the Basso voice line marked *tacet* in the first bar),

and a general Bassi line including organ continuo and figured bass. The bass vocal line is introduced at the beginning of the *Sicut Erat*, a section where the clarinets are not used.

Two aspects of this setting of the lesser Doxology are interesting. It is a work utilising clarinets that was definitely composed for performance on Malta, due to it having been either commissioned by, or more likely written for Grand Master de Rohan. This is shown by the inscription on the opening page of the three letters *S.A.E.,* meaning His Most Eminent Highness; the 'eminent' relating to the Grand Master's status of ranking as a cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church, and 'highness' to his role as the sovereign prince of Malta. The second point is that, it is one of the rare instances of Isouard self-borrowing, or quoting at length from another of his own sacred music works; namely the *Dixit legato,* which is also in E flat major.

Commentary

The opening of the Doxology is one of the few works composed by Isouard in his sacred music that utilises the time signature of 12/8. The tempo of *Andante Sostenuto* matches the long *legato* style of the woodwind and vocal writing. A pastoral introduction of seven bars, with the organ marked *chiuso* leads to the opening vocal entry of the trio of soloists.

As mentioned above, the *Sicut erat* contains some self-borrowings from another of his works, the *Dixit Legato* (Ms 8113A, pp. 1-17). Two questions arise from these self-borrowings. First, which work was written before the other? Did Isouard start to adapt the existing *Dixit Legato* music text to the alternative *Sicut erat*, leaving it unfinished? Or second, did he create this, as new material in a *Sicut erat*, which although unfinished, he later expanded into the longer and fully completed *Dixit Legato*?

In this movement, the orchestral accompaniment suddenly concludes at the end of a fully orchestrated manuscript page at bar 56, leaving only the four vocal lines and the tutti bassi, including the continuo figured bass, which continues to the final bar (bar 100). In order to complete this movement I have attempted a reconstruction of the missing orchestral material. This has been done according to how Isouard might have orchestrated it, taking as my guide the almost identical passages in the *Dixit Legato*, and a full overview of the

orchestral compositional practices that he applies in his sacred music. The sections of the *Sicut erat* that appear almost identical to the *Dixit Legato* are bars 14 to 43, and bars 47 to 56. Other bars in the work only have the vocal and bassi lines as a guide, and on closer inspection of those materials, are not as totally reliable or identical as one would wish.

In the *Sicut erat*, the orchestral introduction of thirteen bars is new material and not identifiable with any previous passage of music. The full chorus entry is in bar 14; exactly where Isouard's self-borrowing begins, (corresponding with bar 36 of the *Dixit*). The previous material is only used for seven bars, before developing into another four bar choral passage. This material returns to the existing *Dixit* score in bar 47, but with subtle changes for five bars, before re-joining the original *Dixit* material at its bar 32, which then continues on to the final bar. The only real variant apart from the differing vocal rhythms, necessitated by the setting of the different text, is in the penultimate bar (bar 99), which has an E flat major ascending scale of semiquavers in the *tutti bassi.*

One has to consider that less than half of the *Dixit Legato* has been self-borrowed for the *Sicut erat*, leaving a larger percentage of the original *Dixit* score unquoted. This might indicate that Isouard borrowed from the *Dixit Legato* in order to create a shorter music movement in a new work, the *Sicut erat*.

Why did the work remain unfinished? There are several possibilities. Did Isouard become disinterested in the project, or did he simply grow too busy in the composition and presentation of the operas composed in his Maltese period? Or, did he decide to use the ideas already composed in the shorter and unfinished work, in yet another and more ambitious project – the *Dixit Legato*?

Finally, was the work interrupted by the French invasion and the ejection of his patrons, the Order, from Malta itself? As we know, with the arrival of Napoleon and the French occupation, Isouard was allocated several other tasks by his newly arrived patrons and employers, with whom he found favour. Unless further documentation is discovered, we may never know, and can only make guesses on the existing materials.

12. Gloria in Re.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

The text is from the opening and closing sections of the *Gloria* from the Ordinary of the Mass. The following text fragments are all that is utilised within the two sections of the work. They are*: Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis,* and *Cum Sancto Spiritu: in Gloria Dei Patris. Amen.*

Instrumental/vocal forces

Flute I and II, oboe I and II, bassoon, horns I and II in C, *trombe lunghe* I and II in D, strings and organ continuo, but without violas, and soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices – as either soloists or as chorus.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 110-132.

This major work is in two parts, where Isouard sets the beginning and the end of the *Gloria* of the Mass. It consists of a *Gloria* commencing with the opening words of the *Gloria*, ending on the text *in excelsis Deo* (bars 1-340), and a finale with the same orchestration, but with the text from *Cum Sancto Spiritu* to the *Amen* (bars 341-469).

This second section commencing with the *Cum Sancto Spiritu* utilises the orchestration of bars 220 to 340. Isouard, however, either omits or more likely, forgets about completing the work with the two trumpets from bars 328 to 340, and again accordingly in the second section, commencing at bar 457 to the end of the movement at bar 469. The *Cum Sancto* section is a part score, known as a *spartitini*, consisting of the four vocal lines together with an opening eight bar bridging passage for strings, bassoons and basso with the tempo marking *come prima*. This part score, or *spartitini* is an additional four pages of manuscript found at the end of the full score of the *Gloria*.

The work is entitled on the front cover *Orig[inale] Gloria in Re Con Tutti Strum[enti] Nicolò Isouard Xuereb.* The manuscript paper used in the work is the usual twelve stave paper in landscape format utilised in the *Nisi Dominus* of 1796, and the *Juravit Dominus*, but in this work utilising all of the staves. On the first page of the full score, the instrumentation is given as Trombe lunghe I and II in Do (but cited as in Re), two Corni in Re, two Flauti, two Oboe, Violini I and II, Fagotto, four untitled voice parts in the appropriate soprano, alto, tenor and bass clefs and a Bassi line containing figured bass for the organ part. This is amongst the largest orchestral force that Isouard utilised in his sacred music.

There are many directions in the organ part of the usual *organo aperto* or *organo chiuso*, but no other instructions apart from the figured bass notation itself. In the edition I have added a timpani part marked *ad libitum* should the performer wish to add this instrument, in what was a normal period practice with works involving trumpets. Players of drums were employed by the Order for military reasons, and tambours and military drums of the period survive in the Palace Armoury in Valletta.

The denomination of *Trombe lunghe* in the score is the only time in his sacred music that Isouard composes for this instrument. Interestingly Benigno Zerafa calls for these instruments in at least five instances, including his Gradual *Benedicta* for the Nativity of the Virgin, or the Dedication *Locus iste*, and his *Kyrie* and *Gloria* in D, dated 1747. Another Maltese composer, Girolamo Abos (1715-1760), calls for *Trombe Lunghe* in his Messa à Due Cori in G, composed in 1756.[32] Certainly these instruments are called for in the earlier Neapolitan operas of Leonardo Leo, including his *L'Olimpiade* of 1737 (*Quel destriere*), and his *Alessandro nell' Indie* (*Destriere che all'armi*) composed for Rome in 1729.[33] *Trombe lunghe* were utilised many times in the scores of Mozart - both in his 'May' Sinfonia in D, K181/K162d, the Serenade and March in D, K 185 and 189, in the overture to his Serenata in two parts, *Ascanio in Alba*, composed for Milan in 1771, and in the overture and all of the

[32] Full score in the Bibliothéque Nationale. F-Pn MS VB BOB-21591 or D-4(2). This work has been edited by the author. In Vella Bondin, *Girolamo Abos*, (Malta: APS Bank, 2002. 15-40), this work is listed in the catalogue as number nine, but the *Trombe Lunghe* are accidentally missing in the orchestration details.

[33] Leonardo Leo (1694-1744) was one of the most prolific Neapolitan composers of his time. The first of his operas, *Il Pisistrato* was staged in 1714 when he was nineteen years of age, and his thirty-first and final opera seria, *Vologeso* was staged in Turin in 1744. He also composed many comic operas, some nineteen works, which were mainly staged in Naples. He was particularly distinguished for his *Azione Sacre* and Oratorios.

arias that are orchestrated for trumpets in his *Dramma per musica, Lucio Silla,* K 135, written in 1772 for the Regio Ducale in Milan.

The term may mean nothing more than the usual *Clarini in Re* or *Trombe in Re*. Or possibly the term *Trombe lunghe* may refer to the long trumpets, rather than the coiled variety of the period. These instruments can be seen in some Maltese engravings including one of an eighteenth-century view of the Port of Valletta.[34] Others can be seen on various buildings on Malta, including the escutcheons on the old Valletta General Post Office (*Auberge d'Italie*), and on several of the funeral trophies of Grand Masters in St John's Conventual Church (e.g. Grand Master Nicolas Cotoner).[35]

There are some puzzling features in the score itself. One is Isouard's habit of the placing the instruction *senza organo* in the middle of phrases, or in seemingly illogical places (bar 22), where in the immediate following bars, figured bass notation actually appears (bars 26 to 32). As this procedure occurs in several other works in this series, I suggest that it could be an instruction from the composer for quiet tasteful playing, as is sometimes required.[36]

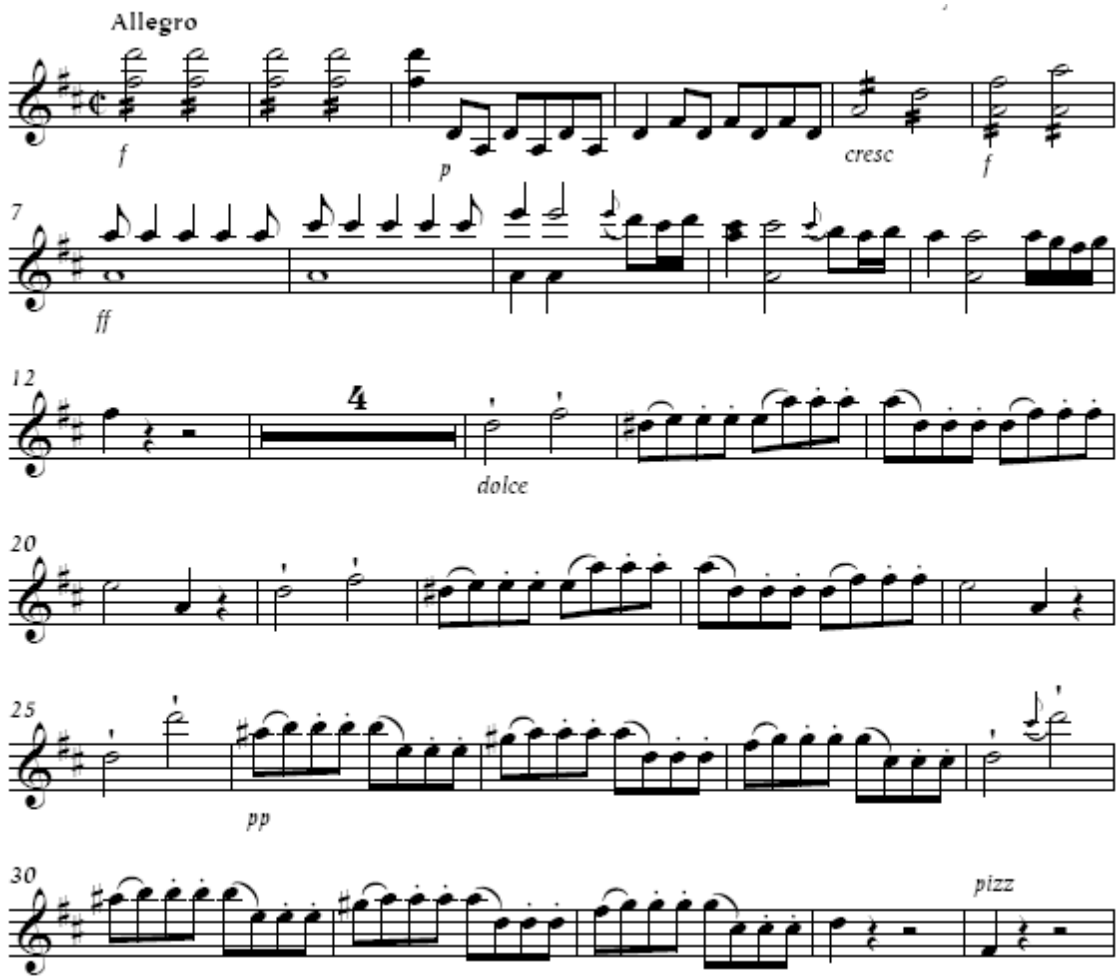
Commentary

The orchestration is interesting and in the opening statement following a usual crescendo passage, Isouard introduces in bar 17, a *dolce* theme in the first Violins, similar to that employed in the opening of the *Dixit Dominus*.

[34] Divall collection.

[35] At the time of writing, the *Auberge d'Italie* is being readied to house the Malta Fine Arts Museum, and with an earlier door being opened on to the new la Valette Square, situated between St Catherine's Church, and the Church of Our Lady of Victories.

[36] The same indication can be found in Haydn's Masses, and even as late as Chopin's Piano Concerto Opus 11.



The horn and trumpet work is independent of the string writing and often fanfare-like motives will be used for these instruments (bars 33-40) with obligato double horn writing accompanying the vocal lines, (bars 41-53).

The opening words of *Gloria in excelsis Deo* are treated alternately as *forte* passages, as well as *piano* semibreve lines in both woodwinds and voices. At the introduction of the words *Et in terra pax hominibus*, the work modulates to F major for 29 bars before returning with the opening material to the key of D major. After a fermata in bar 257, the music returns to the initial thematic material, leading into a *crescendo* which continues until the end of the first section.

The question that arises out of this movement and the second section set to the words *Cum Sancto Spiritu* is, which music was intended to be played between these two movements, to

bring the *Gloria* movement to a complete textual conclusion? This can be only decided by an examination of the key structures, orchestration, paper and watermarks of the other surviving *pezzi staccati* from the settings of the *Gloria* of the Mass that Isouard completed. These include the *Domine Deus* and the *Gratias* (MS 8113A, edition No. 14) *Domine Deus* (MS 8113A, edition No. 9), *Qui Tollis* (MS 8113A, edition No. 25), and the *Quoniam* (MS 8113A, edition No. 26).

Aspects of these matters will have been addressed in a Doctoral thesis presented in Italy at the University of Pavia in 2009 by Maestro John Galea on the *Mass of Nicolò Isouard*.

13. Gloria Patri in E flat major – for soprano solo

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

The text is of the first part of the Lesser Doxology, *Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.*

Instrumental/vocal forces

Clarinet I and II in B flat, horns I and II in E flat, strings with violas, organ continuo and solo soprano.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 25-30.

This setting of the first part of the Lesser Doxology is a short and attractive work for solo soprano, written on only ten pages of the twelve stave manuscript paper. It was obviously a short and interjectory piece, for inclusion where identical orchestral forces were being utilised in the Mass. There is no title inscription on the first page. The orchestral and vocal forces are laid out on the opening page in the following descending order: Violini I and II, Clarinetti I and II in B flat, Corni I and II in E flat, Canto and an unnamed *tutti bassi* line, but one with absolutely no continuo figured bass. Although the clarinets are in B flat, Isouard mistakenly writes them with the clarinet key signature of two flats, and not one.

The tempo indication of *Grave* is one of the very few instances in this sacred music series, where the composer uses that term.[37] In this work the vocal line is quite simple, with only two bars of gentle sextuplet *coloratura*. In contrast, however, the first clarinet has a more prominent role as a virtuoso instrument. Although in a 3/4 time signature, most of the quavers are triplets, with the clarinets in unison, one octave above the violins. There the instrumental line in the violins assumes a 'Bellini like' triplet accompaniment. Passages marked *pizzicato* and *arco* are often left unclear, and the horn notation in bar 26 is puzzling.

[37] For another example of his use of the term *Grave*, see *Gratias* for Alto.

Commentary

For the short duration of the piece, in all 48 bars, the orchestral introduction is an extensive 14 bars, but one with a floating clarinet solo. The voice entry is simple, but with a similarly floating semiquaver passage above the triplet violins. The *Et Spiritui Sancto* is again an elegant lyric *legato* in the voice, broken only in bars 44 and 46 by ecstatic sextuplets for the singer, extending over the whole bar to the word *Gloria*.

14. Gratias agimus tibi in E flat major for alto solo.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

This work is another *pezzo staccato* taken from the *Gloria* of the Mass, probably written for a particular alto castrato. The names of the alto castrato's based on Malta at this time are given in the commentary on the second *De Torrente*, composed for soprano solo. The Latin text set by Isouard reads:

Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.

Or in English:

We give you thanks; we praise you for your glory.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in E flat, strings with violas, organ continuo and solo alto voice.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 142-157.

This large scale aria, for alto castrato is written on the usual twelve stave manuscript paper. It consists of thirty pages of full orchestral score and is entitled *Gratias alto Solo. Con oboe corni obligati*. The composer's name is not mentioned on the first page, but the hologaph is in Isouard's handwriting. The aria is in two distinct movements: a 6/8 *Grave* of 79 bars, that leads directly into an *Allegro* in common time. The performing forces involved in the work are listed on the first page and are, in descending order: Corni I and II in E flat, Oboe I and II, Violini I and II, Viola, Contralto and tutti Basso including organ continuo. The direction *senza organo* is marked in bar one on the *tutti bassi* line, and notation for that instrument first appears in the score in bar 86.

In the first movement, there are phrases where the pairs of horns answer phrases from the two oboes. With the vocal entry in the work, a dialogue ensues between the solo voice and

the principal oboe, though always remaining within the parameters of the pastoral context of the music. It is noteworthy that all of the coloratura for the voice in this 6/8 movement is exclusively set to the words *propter magnam*. The *cavatina* leads immediately into the following *Allegro* movement.

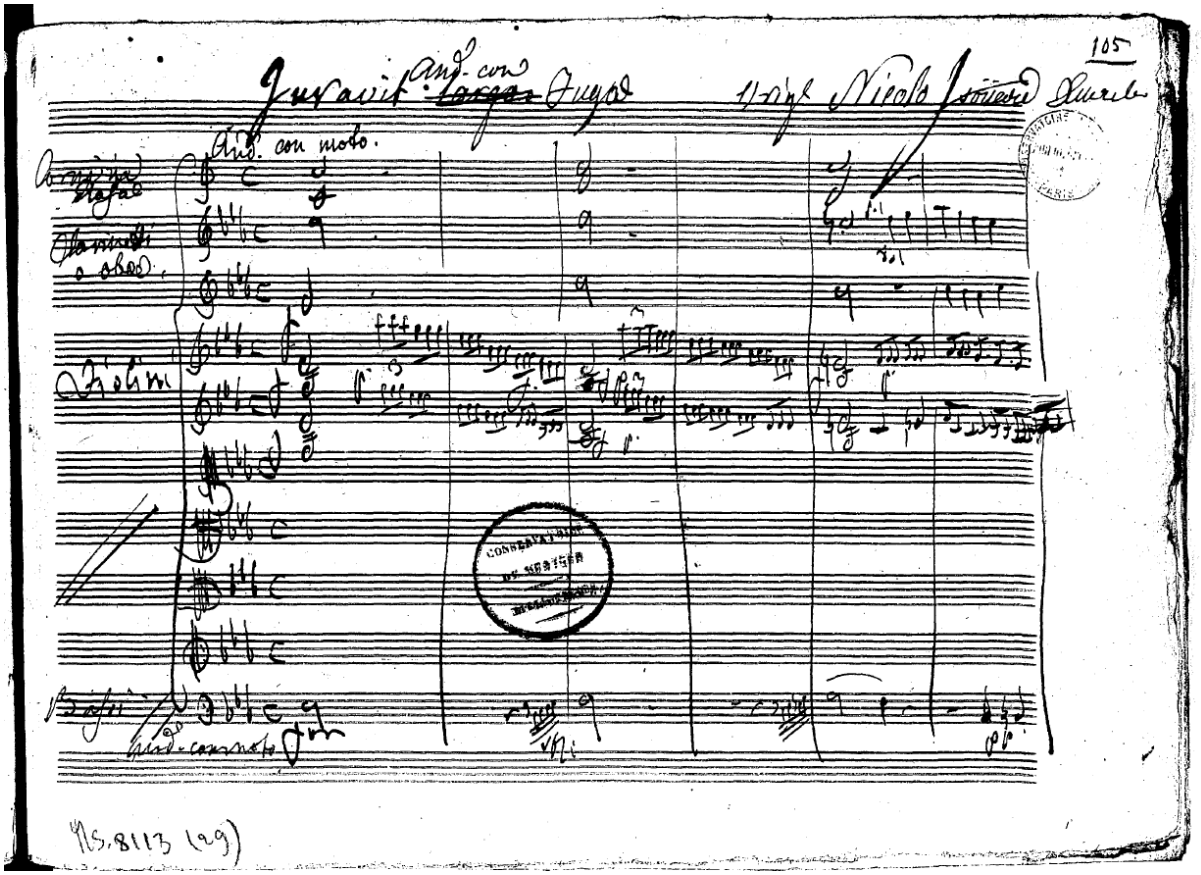
Commentary

The opening of the *Allegro* is unusual as Isouard has doubled the opening statement on the oboe, unison within the viola section, albeit two octaves lower. This compositional device occurs in several other places in his sacred music, and was later used to good effect in the *opéra-comiques*. In the Sinfonia found in the appendix in this series, the composer also uses the same effect of unison with solo flute, doubled by bassoon two octaves lower.[38]

There is no further new text introduced in the *Allegro*, as the entire text of the *Gratias* has already been utilised in the 6/8. This *Allegro* movement is in a quasi-operatic style, but in itself is unremarkable, except for repeated six bar phrases of coloratura sextuplets. The coloratura passage is technically very well written for the voice, and composed in a style that would suit the alto castrato voice.

[38] The same device of writing in very widely separated octaves, but in unison is used by Isouard in the Overture for his 1794 opera *L'avviso ai maritati*.

15. Juravit Dominus con Fuga.



Place and date of composition

Unknown but possibly composed around 1796-1798.

Text and Liturgical function

The *Juravit Dominus* is another *pezzo staccato* taken from the first psalm of Vespers for Sunday, the *Dixit Dominus*. In the liturgy it is either utilised as a verse, or within the complete psalm itself. The text of the psalm verse as set by Isouard is:

Juravit Dominus et non paenitebit eum:
Tu es sacerdos in aeternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech.

Or in English:

The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind.
You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, clarinet I and II in C, horns I and II in E flat, strings and organ continuo, but without violas, and soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 105-115.

Although this work is not dated, its musical maturity and sureness of orchestration suggest it as being a work from the end of the Maltese period. Being on the same paper and twelve stave format as the *Nisi Dominus* (1796), would suggest that it comes from around or more probably after that year.

The front page of the work is described as *Juravit con Fuga; originale Nicolò Isouard Xuereb.* The orchestration on the manuscript page is formatted with Corni in E flat on the top stave, and Clarinetti and Oboe I and II in C, each sharing the same stave. Then Violini I and II, with the following vocal parts not itemised, but obvious from the clefs of soprano, alto, tenor and bass, and finally with a Bassi line with figured bass. That organ line also includes several organ directions such as *organo aperto***,** or *organo chiuso.* The top and bottom staves are uniformly left blank, and there are no violas in the orchestration.

The text is taken from verse four of Psalm 109 (110) from the *Dixit Dominus*. It was a psalm or extract from that psalm that was used by many Baroque and Classical period composers, including Palestrina, Dietrich Buxtehude, Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, and as part of a larger setting of the entire psalm by Handel, Vivaldi and Isouard himself. (See *Dixit Dominus*). Jommelli set the work in 1752 for St Peter's Basilica in Rome, where it was used as an Antiphon for the Common of Apostles and Evangelists.[39] His version, smaller in scale to Isouard's setting, was only written for soprano and alto solos with bass continuo.

There may be a precursor for this work in the *Juravit Dominus* written by the Maltese composer Girolamo Abos (1715-1760).[40] In his own setting of his complete *Dixit Dominus* composed in 1758, Abos allocates the opening music material to the first line of the text, and then only uses the complete second line of *Tu es sacerdos in aeternam secundum*

[39] Dottori, 52.

[40] Vella Bondin. *Girolamo Abos*, 15-40. In the Abos setting, in D major, the opening statement for the bass voice on *Juravit* is identical to the Isouard – surely a total coincidence as Isouard would probably have not seen the score.

ordinem Melchisedech as the only text sung in the following fugue.[41] This mirrors Isouard's setting, and was deliberately done to give added importance to these words in the psalm verse. Like Isouard, Abos also composed a separate *Juravit Dominus,* which like Isouard's *Te Deum* was also scored for five soloists, (SSATB).[42] The use of this number of voices was a particular feature of Neapolitan sacred music of the period.

The detailed orchestral accompaniment of this work and the complexity and sophistication of the fugal section, suggests that one can ascribe the work on stylistic grounds to 1797 or 1798. Its complexity and grandeur might indicate that the composer wrote this large scale setting for the processional entrance of the Prior of the Conventual Church of St John at the commencement of a liturgical rite.

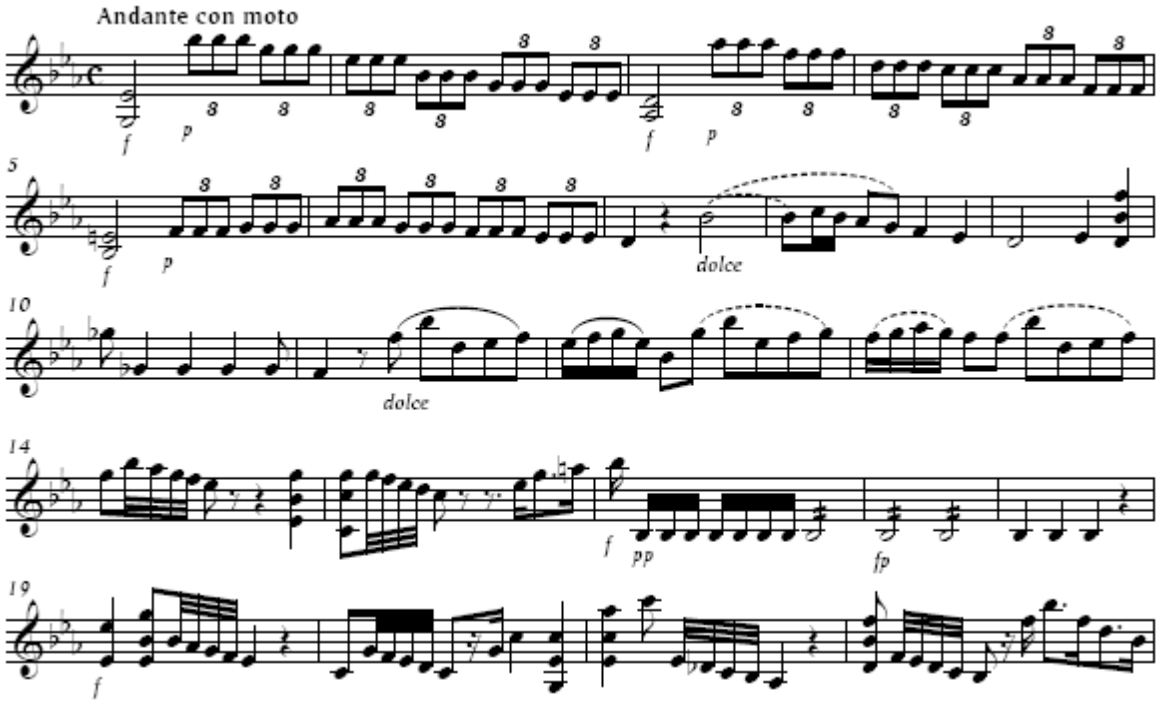
It is of interest to note that the Grand Prior of the Conventual Church during Isouard's tenure was the *Bailli* Frà Raimondo Albino Menville.[43] Menville was born on Malta in 1715 and joined the Priory of Pisa as a Conventual Chaplain at an early age in 1728. Against vigorous opposition from some of the knights of the French *Langue*, he was appointed Grand Prior of St John's on 21 February 1784.[44] Menville died on 6 May 1801. He features prominently in the often biting notes of the Abbé Charles Francois Boyer (1733-1790).[45] Menville appears in the group portrait (c.1791), attributed to the school of Antoine Favray, of the 'dignitaries of the Order', standing beside Grand Master de Rohan. The painting is held in the collection of the Museum of the Venerable Order of St John, St John's Gate, Clerkenwell, London.

Commentary.

In three sections, the work is 138 bars long. The opening movement has a tempo marking of *Andante con moto*, and is one of the most striking creations in Isouard's sacred music. On the first page Isouard had originally specified the tempo direction *Largo*, but deleted it in

[41] Abos. *Dixit Dominus*, MS, Biblioteca Conservatorio di Musica San Pietro a Majella, Naples, Italy, I-Nc.
[42] Abos. *Juravit Dominus*, MS, Biblioteca Conservatorio di Musica San Pietro a Majella, Naples, Italy, I-Nc.
[43] Michael Galea, 'The Grand Prior of the Conventual Church of St John of Jerusalem', *Journal of the Monastic Military Orders* 2 (Malta: Malta Institute of Cultural Studies, 2009): 87-105.
[44] The appointment is cited in one other source as taking place in 1785.
[45] Alain Blondy, *Des Nouvelles de Malte : Correspondance de M. l'Abbé Boyer* (Brussels: P.I.E. – Peter Lang Pub., 2004).

favour of the faster tempo. After an introductory descending triplet figure in the strings, the chorus enters in bar nineteen to a turbulent dotted passage that is somewhat reminiscent of a similar passage in Mozart's Requiem.



In bar 41 and at the text of *Tu es sacerdos in aeternum*, a choral fugue begins, written in *alla breve* time signature, but in 8/4 figuration, obviously denoting a *presto* tempo. The *fuga* is 77 bars in length and ends with a series of four *forte* breves on the repeated words *Melchisedech*. This *fuga* is interesting for the extreme chromatics that are employed, and the firm quadruple stoppings in the first violins. The figured bass is heavily notated and detailed within the *fuga* itself. After this, the original time signature and tempo returns, where the initial musical and textual material is again restated. The work ends reflectively with a three bar *piano* phrase in the strings.

16. Kyrie in E flat major.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

The text is the *Kyrie eleison* from the Ordinary of the Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in E flat, strings and organ continuo, but without violas, and soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 134-141.

The front page of this work is untitled and without the composer's name. Written on fifteen pages of the usual twelve stave manuscript paper - the top and the lowest staves remain unused. The performing forces are listed on the first page of the music in descending order as: Violini I and II, Oboe I and II, and Corni I and II in E flat. The four vocal lines are unnamed but are written in the soprano, alto, tenor and bass clefs. The bass line with the organ continuo and figured bass is on the lowest stave.

It is impossible to assess exactly what vocal forces are called for in the work. It could have been composed for four solo voices, or for a four-part choir. In bar 15 of the *Christe eleison*, there is an *ossia obligato* bar on the soprano stave, which suggests a solo soprano line.

Commentary

This *Kyrie* is a gentle, reflective work of 100 bars in length. An opening four bar statement from the strings is repeated and reinforced by the four vocal parts on the text *Kyrie eleison,* later amplified by the oboes and horns. Unexpected diminished chords in bars 28 and 62 accompany the second choral *Kyrie eleison*. The mature orchestral passage that follows, suggests that it is one of the final compositions in this series.

After a *dolce sotto voce* passage, followed by a pause without the voice, the full vocal ensemble joyfully returns with the opening melodic material. The work is gentle, but austere in its musical simplicity, and the ending is similarly prepared by a modulating passage over a low pedal E flat, toward its quietly reflective conclusion.

17. Kyrie Leg. in E flat major 1795 - Fragment.

Place and date of composition

The fragment was composed in 1795 and was written presumably on Malta.

Text and Liturgical function

The text is the *Kyrie eleison* from the Ordinary of the Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Flutes I and II, clarinets I and II in B flat, bassoon, horns I and II in E flat, strings, with violas and organ continuo, and soprano, alto tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 132-135.

This is the beginning of an important late work, though one sadly unfinished, for the manuscript abruptly ends at the end of page seven and without any indication of a reduction in the composition or orchestration process. It is the beginning of a work by Isouard which demonstrates that he is clearly gaining a real proficiency in this style of composition.

The full title page reads: *Kyrie Leg[ato* or *Leggiero]. À 4 Voci. Con tutti Strom[enti] obl[igati] Per ordine di S[ua]. Em[inenza]*^{za} *Composto da Nicolò Isouard Maltese Gen[naio] 1795.* It could be argued that the *5* in the date might be an *8*, but the pen line from the preceding *9* connecting to the final numeral in the date might refute this. The date is most probably 1795. The work is in Isouard's favourite key for *Kyrie* settings, that of E flat major. The only *Kyrie* not in that key is the Naples manuscript (Ms8113A, edition no. 18), which is in the related key of C minor.

The forces are listed on the opening page of the music in this descending order: Violini I and II, Flauti I and II, Clarinetti I and II in B flat, Corni I and II in E flat, Fagotto, Viola, Soprano, Contralto, Tenore and Bassi, and a tutti bassi line including the figured organ continuo. The viola clef is mistakenly written as a tenor clef, but the actual music notation is in the viola

key. The use of clarinets together with a separate bassoon line is significant, demonstrating that Isouard possibly had access to clarinets for this Maltese period composition. The independent bassoon line is another noteworthy feature. Although the composer had access to two bassoonists on the roster of the Conventual Church, namely the players Albino and Pietro, he rarely wrote for the instrument on a separate stave.[46]

Commentary

The work opens on a simple E flat major phrase in the violins and upper wind, answered by the clarinets. Over a running demisemiquaver passage in the violins, this is developed in a crescendo, and the opening melodic statement is sung by the choir at their first entry, and then again answered by the clarinets and horns. This passage is again repeated for the second time before a sudden modulation into G minor on the entry of the text *Christe eleison,* and then a repetition of the previous phrases heard in bars 15 to 18. Barely has this material developed in a *Più moto* change of tempo, than the manuscript abruptly ends in bar 38. Did Isouard discontinue writing the work, or have any following pages become detached or lost? Sadly the musical promise contained in these auspicious 38 bars was not to be fulfilled, or has not survived.

[46] Franco Bruni, 'Musica alla Cattedrale e alla Concattedrale di Malta durante l'Occupazione Francese (1798-1800)', *Proceedings of History Week, 1999*. (Malta: n.p. 2002), 53-65.

18. Kyrie in C minor – Naples 1797.

Place and date of composition

The work was composed in Naples in 1797.

Text and Liturgical function

The text is the *Kyrie eleison* from the Ordinary of the Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in E flat, strings and organ continuo, but without violas and soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 92-109.

This large scale Kyrie of 242 bars length was composed in, or for Naples in 1797, the final numeral *7* being written over an existing numeral *8*. Written in a more mature hand than normally found in this music series, the title page simply reads: *Kyrie E flat Isouard. Napoli 97(8).* The surname *Isouard* is written in an assured and elegant copperplate, and with three pen flourishes under the name itself - appearing as though it was added later and written by a different pen-nib, than that which had written the original music notation.

The orchestral forces are listed on the first page of the music in this descending order as: Corni in Mi flat I and II, Oboe I and II, Violini I and II, followed by soprano, alto, tenor and bass clefs, which are unnamed, and finally the tutti bassi and organ line.

The work is in two sections - an opening *Andante amoroso* in 3/4 followed by an *alla breve Allegro giusto*. From the writing, I am assuming that the work is generally composed for full chorus. There are a few, but obvious references to the vocal indications of *solo* or *sola* for the soprano in bar 37 and in the *alla breve allegro* section at bars 135 to 137 for the soprano, alto and tenor voices. The final *solo* indication is in bar 185 for the soprano - however, there are no *tutti* directions for voices in any place throughout the score.

Commentary

The orchestral introduction of 28 bars in C minor features an elegiac oboe solo, which echoes the opening phrases, firstly from the violins with octave arpeggios, and then by the two horns. The 'grinding', diminished chords of fourths and seconds in bars 12 and 16, resolve on a series of phrases from the two oboes, which leads to a *fermata* in G major for the orchestral ensemble.

The choral entry is a recapitulation of the opening orchestral statement. I would particularly note the interesting use of the crescendo stem, pointing upwards over the first violins in bar 39, a device later used by the young Rossini in some of his manuscripts. In the same passage, the use of the rising minor on the words *eleison* is particularly moving and allows the following passage to highlight some chromatic interest in the parts. This occurs also with the use of a passing G flat in the alto line, set against a pedal bass note on a low F in the bassi (bars 56, 58 and 60). In bar 62 Isouard appends the term that seemingly reads *filatro il suono* on the oboe staves, an expression not seen in any of the other sacred works by this composer. But it is a term that is well suited to highlight the rising chromatic scale of seven bars.

The first entry of the text *Christe eleison* in bar 75, and its following short passage of seven bars remains embedded in the keys of C and F minor, producing a musical impression of contrition and repentance.

The opening *Kyrie* returns briefly before being interrupted by the *alla breve Allegro giusto,* where the key modulates to the affirmative E flat major and introduces some efficient contrapuntal writing for both the orchestra and voices. Commencing at bar 141 in B flat major, and again in bar 161, Isouard introduces a playful interchange between the four vocal lines, where each voice has an individual theme, playing canonically against the other lines.

In bars 178 and 179, on the text *Christe, Christe*, the composer suddenly interrupts the onward flow of the music by two fermata bars, where the four voices supported by the bassi and continuo declaim those repeated words. This is followed on the fourth beat of each bar

by chords from the remainder of the orchestra. These chordal punctuations move immediately in bar 180 into a repetition of the opening statement of the *Allegro* itself, firstly from the orchestra and then joined by the voices five bars later.

One of Isouard's finest contrapuntal passages is a prelude to the recapitulation of the opening thematic material in bar 202, where the voices again return to the independent contrapuntal lines mentioned beforehand. This leads to two repeated eight bar phrases of semibreves in the voices, which act as a signal to the beginning of the finale of the work. The *Kyrie* comes to a gentle conclusion with the voices intoning the final *eleison* underpinned by a long pedal B flat in the two oboes. The work ends reflectively with a gentle orchestral postlude of ten bars.

19. Kyrie Missa No. 2 in E flat major - Fragment.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Fragment of *Kyrie* of the Ordinary of the Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Soprano, alto, tenor and bass voice parts only.

The source and commentary

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, p. 133 verso and recto.

This manuscript of forty-nine bars, again in the key of E flat major, is written on two pages of twelve stave paper. These simply contain the voice parts, for soprano, alto, tenor and bass, as a *spartitini*. There are no orchestral indications or cues in this score - simply the four vocal lines.

The inscription on the first page of the score is interesting in that it is entitled: *Kyrie Messa No. 2. Nicolo Isouard orig[inale] Strom[enti] nella partitura del coro fran.....*

This inscription tells us that Isouard considered that a first Mass already existed, and that this vocal score without any accompaniment was the second in the series. If so, we may possibly never know. As there are some four *Kyrie's* by Isouard, but none of them labelled as the first Mass, then one might conclude that there could be other missing settings of the *Gloria* and the *Credo* by the same composer. In the absence of any letters concerning the sacred music, then this can only be a possibility that should be considered. Written immediately prior to a turbulent period in Maltese history and religious and musical patronage, it remains a fascinating thought.

20. Lauda Jerusalem.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

This psalm (Psalm 147) is recited during the Vespers of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Latin text set by the composer reads:

Lauda Jerusalem Dominum lauda Deum tuum Sion
Quoniam confortavit seras portarum tuarum benedixit filiis tuis in te.
Qui posuit fines tuos pacem et adipe frumenti satiat te.
Qui emittet eloquium suum terrae velociter currit sermo eius.
Qui dat nivem sicut lanam nebulam sicut cinerem spargit.
Mittit crystallum suum sicut buccellas ante faciem frigoris eius quis sustinebit ?
Emittet verbum suum et liquefaciet ea flabit spiritus eius et fluent aquae.
Qui adnuntiat verbum suum Jacob justitias et judicia sua Israel.
No, non fecit taliter omni nationi et judicia sua non manifestavit eis. No, no !
Gloria Patri, Patri et Filio, et Spritus Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

The English translation is as follows:

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise thy God, O Sion.
Because he has strengthened the bolts of thy gates, he hath blessed thy children within thee.
Who hath placed peace in thy borders: and filleth thee with the fat of corn.
Who sendeth forth his speech to the earth: his word runneth swiftly.
Who giveth snow like wool: scattereth mists like ashes.
He sendeth his crystals like morsels: who shall stand before the face of his cold?
He shall send out his word, and shall melt them: his wind shall blow, and the waters shall run.
Who declareth his word to Jacob: his justices and his judgements to Israel.
He hath not done in like manner to every nation: and his judgements he hath not made manifest to them. No!
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Violin I and II, basso and organ continuo and soprano I and II.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 57-60.

This vignette duet for two [solo] sopranos and strings with continuo, but without violas, is a fine piece of writing. Set to the text of Psalm 147, the work uses all of the Latin text of the psalm, but omits the final *Alleluia* and replaces it with the lesser Doxology, a complete *Gloria Patri*.

Written on eight pages of manuscript paper, the work possibly dates from an earlier period in Isouard's career. It is laid out on ten stave paper. The title page inscription reads: *Lauda Jerusalem a 2 Soprani, o Sopr[ano] e Cont[ralto]. Orig[inale] Nìcolò Isoüard*. The composer's use of the double accent on his Christian name is unusual, or possibly just a slip of the pen. The use of the diaeresis over the *ü* in the surname may assist in dating some works by grouping those compositions together that include this spelling of the surname. The same use of the diaeresis is used in the *Angelus Domini* (edition No. 1).

The performing forces are only scantily mentioned on the first page, those being the VV for Violini I and II and the term Basso for the *tutti bassi* and organ continuo line. Both of the voices are written in soprano clef, and that these two voices in unison reach to a top B flat in bar 88 would indicate that the term *contralto* mentioned in the opening inscription may be a mistake, unless some of the alto castratos on the Maltese roster of singers had a particularly high tessitura. With the alto, or indeed *mezzo alto* castrato voice, this may have been a distinct possibility.

The psalm was a popular one with composers. Settings exist as early as the Flemish Adrian Willaert (1490-1565), and both the Venetians, Giovanni and Andrea Gabrieli, through to the French composer Henri Desmarets (1661-1741), and the Neapolitan Nicola Antonio Porpora (1686-1768). One of the later settings is by Lorenzo Perosi. The Maltese composer, Francesco Azopardi, wrote no less than five settings of this text between 1772 and 1800 - works that would have been known to the young Isouard.

Commentary

The opening verse, *Lauda Jerusalem* begins with a triumphal dotted figure in the violins. Initially utilising both voices in thirds, the composer reverts to the solo first soprano voice at the words *Quoniam confortavit*. The two solo voices, again in parallel thirds, felicitously return on the words *benedixit filiis.* Isouard deliberately changes the musical structure of the vocal line at the entry of the *Qui posuit fines* with a canonic floating interplay between the two independent voices. This continues, but on a more dramatic level in the final text of the third verse, *et adipe frumenti*, which reaches a *fermata* after the repeated words *satiat*.

The fourth and most of the fifth verse of the Psalm is set as a solo for the second soprano, the two voices appropriately re-joining in a canonic passage on the text *nebulam sicut cinerem spargit.* Notable is Isouard's chromatic setting of the confronting text *ante faciem frigoris*, the passage ending on a pause with the questioning text *ejus quis sustinebit?* As is his habitual practice, Isouard also uses the letter *J* in his more traditional spelling on the score of the purer *Ierusalem* and *eius.*[47]

There is a challenging opening to verse seven, *(Emittet verbum suum),* where the composer utilises the soprano voices in unison, with a phrase that reaches to a top B flat. Isouard paints the following references to 'the wind' and 'the waves' with interweaving demisemiquavers in the violins. At the penultimate verse, Qui *adnuntiat verbum*, the two voices are again joined together. At the beginning of the final verse *Non fecit taliter* the text is treated dramatically with canonic and ascending interweaving by the two voices, and with effective repetition of the words, *No* and *Non*. After the final words of the psalm, *manifestavit eis*, Isouard adds two confronting *No! No!* - the repeated word being set to a pause that covers the entire bar.

The *Gloria Patri* sees a return to the key of G major, and a repeat of the orchestral material of the opening phrases. In the Doxology Isouard uses the Latin text *et Spiritus Sancto*, rather than *Spiritui Sancto*. The first mention of the *Amen* is punctuated by a fermata over the bar, and the work reflectively ends with two gentle repetitions of the *Amen*, followed by an orchestral postlude of three bars, using the same dotted figures as in the opening bar. This

[47] The use of the *J* replacing the *I* in Maltese, is a prominent feature of the modern Maltese language.

is an architecturally thoughtful and detailed setting of the text of the psalm. In its 158 bars length, Isouard has used the opportunity to provide a wide variety of musical devices, intended to amplify the meaning of the text.

21. Laetatus Sum.

Place and date of composition

The composition was written in 1797, and composed presumably on Malta. This is partly an assumption on my part, for we know that Isouard was in Naples for part of the year.

Text and Liturgical function

Psalm 121 (122). The psalm is often used in the liturgy of the second Sunday of Advent was an essential work to be included in Isouard's portfolio of compositions. It is also sung as the third psalm in the Vespers service of Marian feasts and feasts of female saints, and in this context appears in the 1610 Vespers of Claudio Monteverdi. The full text of the Psalm set in the work is:

Laetatus sum in his quae dicta sunt mihi: In domum Domini ibimus.
Stantes erant pedes nostri, in atriis tuis, Jerusalem.
Jerusalem, quae aedificatur ut civitas; cujus participatio ejus in idipsum.
Illuc enim ascenderunt tribus, tribus Domini: testimonium Israel, ad confitendum nomini Domini.
Quia illic sederunt sedes in judicio, sedes super domum David.
Rogate quae ad pacem sunt Jerusalem, et abundantia diligentibus te.
Fiat pax in virtute tua, et abundantia in turribus tuis.
Propter fratres meos et proximos meos, loquebar pacem de te.
Propter domum Domini Dei nostri, quaesivi bona tibi.
Gloria Patri, Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in E flat, strings, including violas and organ continuo with soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 90-101.

This impressive work, a full setting of Psalm 121 (122), is dated 6th July 1797 - the penultimate year of the rule of The Order of Malta. It would have been amongst Isouard's last essays in the field of sacred music. Two hundred and three bars in length, it is one of his

finest orchestral works in this series, and is well written for the voices, utilising many sophisticated clashes and suspensions in the vocal lines.

The inscription on the title page reads: *Letatus sum. À 4, orig[inale] Nicolò Isouard Xuereb*. On the final page of the twenty-four pages of manuscript is the inscription and date: *Fini le 6h Juillet 97,* words that are accompanied by an assured and ornamental pen flourish. It is written in the key of B flat on twelve stave paper, with the top stave unused, except on two occasions for two *ossia* passages of simplified pairs of oboe alternatives. The scoring of the work is listed on the manuscript in this descending order: Corni I and II in E flat, Oboe I and II, VV for Violini I and II, and Viola. This is followed by lines for the soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices in their appropriate clefs, but without voice listings, and at the bottom of the page, the usual Bassi line, including figured bass for the organ continuo.

Being a common Vespers psalm, it had been set by a large number of composers, including Monteverdi, Orlando de Lasso, Victoria, Niccolo Porpora as well as Michael Haydn. Maltese composers who set this verse to music include Benigno Zerafa (1753), and three settings by Francesco Azopardi (1776, 1781 and 1800). Girolamo Abos composed a setting of this text for four voices and strings.[48]

Commentary

With an unusual tempo marking of *Lieto* (happy-joyful), the work begins and ends with two bars of formal dotted chords before the choral entry in bar four. The main choral entry is characteristic of many of the following *tutti* passages in the chorus, which are separated by soft passages of lighter textured vocal lines. This also occurs on significant words such as *Domum*, (which Isouard habitually writes with a capital D, and also on the same word in verse nine), and at the first mention of the word *Jerusalem*, where the music becomes suddenly hushed.

In bars 60-61 Isouard writes an *ossia* of two bars of descending minims in thirds for the two oboes, one of the very few instances that he does this in this series of sacred music. In his

[48] Bibl Cons S Pietro di Majella, I-Nc. NA0059 Mus. Rel. 6-22.6.9(2).

setting of the Latin text, he also uses the abbreviated *judicio* instead of the more traditional *iudicium*. Isouard changes the mood of the piece in a gentle passage to the prayerful *Rogate quae ad pacem,* before returning to the contrapuntal texture with the tutti chorus on the words *et abundantia.* In verse seven, the text is dramatically set in C minor for the solo bass voice, followed by the solo tenor in verse eight, before the tutti chorus returns for the final verse of the psalm, *Propter Domum Domini*. The text *loquebar pacem de te*, in bars 133-140 is beautifully set in a descending passage for the tenor voice and falling descants in the violins.

At the end of the psalm, Isouard conforms to the liturgy by adding the lesser Doxology, beginning with a setting in a *Largo non troppo* in 3/4 time of the *Gloria Patri* for solo soprano. This twelve bar passage is characterised by *arpeggio* triplets in the violins, followed by a return to the full ensemble in an *alla breve Allegro* on *Sicut erat in principio*. This section utilises material that has been first heard in the earlier *Lieto* section. After three hushed *Amens*, the work ends with the same pattern of dotted chords, which have been thematically present throughout the entire score.

22. Magnificat

Place and date of composition

The date of the composition is not recorded, but as the work has the dedication *Pour St Jean*, then that could signify that it was composed on Malta for the Conventual Church of St John.

Text and Liturgical function

Magnificat – the Canticle of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which is an essential prayer in the daily office of Vespers in the Roman Catholic Church.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in B flat, strings including violas and organ continuo, with soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 136-180.

This setting of the *Magnificat* is one of Isouard's most thematically integrated works, and also one of his longest, being 462 bars in length. Attached to this work is an unfinished fragment of a further eighty-three bars, written on a further fifteen pages, of a *Sicut erat* which is appended immediately after the *Magnificat* full score, at the end of the bound manuscript.

This uplifting canticle of the Virgin Mary, as recounted in Luke 1: 46-55 has been set by many composers, particularly by Johann Sebastian Bach, as well as by his two talented sons, Carl Phillip Emmanuel and Johann Christian Bach. Other settings from the period nearer to Isouard are by the Neapolitan, Niccolò Jommelli (1714-1774), and by Josef Schüster (1748-1812), who was active in Naples. There are also *Magnificats* by two composers who had some links with Malta, namely Niccolò Antonio Zingarelli (1752-1837) who composed no less than fifty-five settings of the text, and also by one of Isouard's teachers in Naples, Pietro Alessandro Guglielmi (1728-1804).

On Malta, no less than six settings of the *Magnificat* were composed by Isouard's main teacher, Francesco Azopardi between 1772 and 1800 - Benigno Zerafa composed four settings between 1744 and 1758. Girolamo Abos also wrote a *Magnificat* in C major. Scored for four-part strings and continuo, with two horns, full scores survive in at least three music archives.[49]

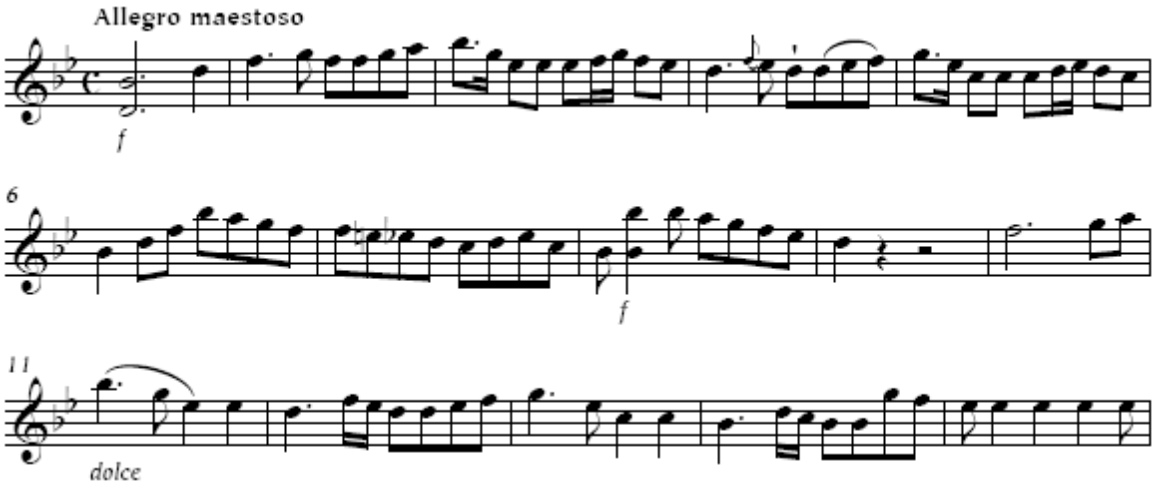
The inscription on the front cover of the Isouard work reads: *Magnificat a 4 voci Obligati Con VV [*Violin I and II*], Oboe, Corni, e Bassi, obb[ligati] D[onato]*^{to} *Niccolò Isouard de Xuereb Pour St Jean Malte.* Also on the front page are the words: *Coro alto. soprano Basso solo Bassi alto e soprano*; a mixture of the vocal forces required in the work, albeit incomplete, for the solo and chorus tenor line is missing. Again the composer writes his name in an unusual format, including a double *'c'* in his Christian name. The inscription in the above paragraph of *Pour St Jean* indicates that the work was composed for the Conventual Church of St John in Valletta, or directly for the Order of St John.

The musical forces in the work are listed in descending order on the front page of the music as: Corni I and II in B flat. Oboe I and II, Violini I and II, Canto, Alto(?), (followed by an indecipherable word), Tenore, Basso and Bassi e Organo on the lowest line. The work is one of the few manuscripts in this series to be written on ten stave paper. The Viola line does not start until page two on the manuscript itself (bar 10), and I have interpreted this in the edition as meaning that the viola line up to that point is to be played *col basso*.

Commentary

In the orchestral introduction, the first violins play a theme which runs through the full work. This is used in a semi fugal fashion in many of the vocal entries, played over an extended *ostinato* passage of quavers in the tutti bassi and second violins. This thematic device appears in each of the opening vocal entries of the *Magnificat anima mea* from bar 9 to bar 37. It is requoted, but with some musical variations at a repetition of the opening text in bars 69 to 97.

[49] The Civica Museo Bibliografico Musicale, Bologna, I-Bc, the Biblioteca Estense e Univ. Modena, I-Moe, and the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, A-Wn.



On page two of the manuscript, Isouard has written in a barely legible hand what appears to be the following words *'Per Baoai il Com(mendatore)ᵉ. per il suo ripote (nipote) Gennaro'*. Apart from the possible reference to the name of the soprano castrato soloist Gennaro (Oliva), I am at a loss to understand the significance of this inscription, written in an otherwise tiny hand, other than that it appears to be a dedication of some kind, or an indication pertaining to a performer.

At the text *Ecce enim ex hoc beatam* the vocal lines move to a more legato phrasing in a weaving counterpoint. At this point Isouard forgets what key he is in, and omits several A flats and F sharps; omissions which are corrected in the edition in parenthesis (bars 55-63). In bar 25 and at the text *et misericordia eius,* the texture of the music changes again, and the voices reflect the words in a simpler yet more soloistic use of the vocal lines, accompanied by only the strings and continuo.

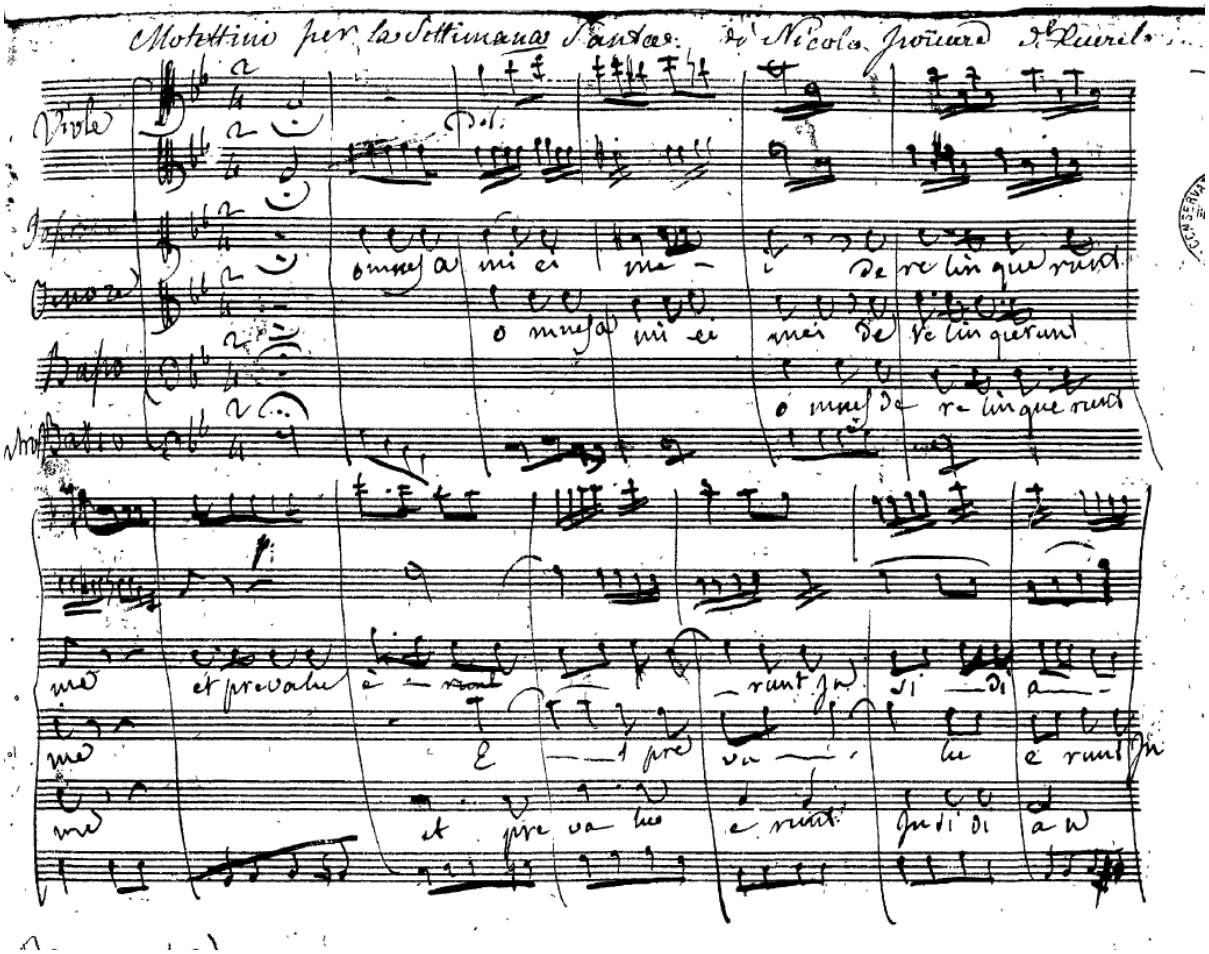
The strength and power of the passage *Fecit potentiam* is given to the solo bass voice, in a dramatic *Allegro vivo* aria in C major. Because of page turns in the manuscript, Isouard omits to indicate the change of key, but does so when the work returns to the dominant in bar 349. I am assuming that the horns, which Isouard changes to Corni in Do, are meant to be in alto or basso as the high writing would stretch the player's tessitura.

The chorus re-enters in the *Deposuit potentes,* leading to a pause on the repeat of the *exultavit*. The following aria, *Esurientes implevit bonis,* is given to the tenor soloist with only the strings accompanying the voice. Eventually the oboes join the voice in some playful 'question and answer phrases', which lead directly into a C minor duet for the soprano and alto soloists. A pause for the two voices on the word *recordatus* returns to B flat major, and the triumphant return to the first thematic statement, heard at the beginning of the *Magnificat* but now to the text *Sicut locutus est*. This time, Isouard does not omit to add the change of key signature, but neglects to notate this obvious change of key for the two horns.

As in other works, Isouard liturgically adds the lesser doxology - the *Gloria Patri* being a short solo of 15 bars for the soprano voice in a *Largo* tempo. The *Sicut erat in principio* is scored for the full chorus, and the work ends on a triumphal note with the return of the opening statement on the repeated *Amens.*

As I mentioned in the opening commentary to this particular work, there is a second and fragmentary *Sicut erat in principio*, which is sketched out for the four vocal lines and the bassi. On the first page of the manuscript (page 196b), there is also a viola line which discontinues after the first four bars. Written in *Alla breve* and in E flat, it may be a first attempt at another ending of the *Magnificat*, or as it is in the key of E flat major, may be a discarded fragment of another work. It is not included in the edition.

23. Motettini per la Settimana Santa.



Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Five motets set to responsories for Holy Week. *Omnes amici miei, In Monte Oliveti, O vos omnes, Velum templi scissum est,* and *Tristis est anima mea*.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Violas I and II, bassi and organ continuo, with soprano, alto tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 11-24.

The matins of Holy Week include nine responsories for Maundy Thursday, nine for Good Friday, and nine for Holy Saturday; some twenty-seven responsories in all. Many of these, if

not all were set to music. Isouard has composed five of these *motettini* or little motets. The titles of the five motets are *Omnes amici miei, In Monte Oliveti, O vos omnes, Velum templi scissum est,* and *Tristis est anima mea*.

These five short motets are amongst Isouard's most charming compositions in the series. They are written for three and four voices, and with an instrumental ensemble of two divisi violas, bassi and organ continuo. The absence of violins in the work, and the use of two separate viola lines give these miniature works a rich but dark texture that provides the appropriate atmosphere for these responses.

Except for one crucial point, the genesis for this unusual orchestration might have been Ètienne Méhul's opera *Uthal*, which is based on Celtic mythology. *Uthal* is a work where divided violas were the highest string instruments in the orchestra.[50] In effect it was deliberately an entire opera without violins. As that work was not premiered in Paris at the Théâtre Feydeau (Opéra-Comique) until 17 May 1806, however, then we must say that it was Isouard who attempted to create these sombre musical colours for the Holy Week celebrations with a similar but chamber orchestration. For his part, Méhul had deliberately tried to achieve these sombre colours, in creating his image of a mythical Celtic world through his dark orchestration.[51]

Written on twenty-two manuscript pages, the five motets are simply entitled *Motettini per la Settimana Santa: [compos]tò Nicolo Isoüard de Xuereb*. The performing ensemble is listed on the first page of the score in this descending order: Viole I and II, Soprano, Tenore, Basso and Contrabasso. The Alto voice is only introduced in the *O Vos Omnes*, the third motet in the series. All four voices are only used in the fifth and final motet, the *Tristis est anima mea.*

Judging from the style and architecture of these five works, I would suggest that they date from around 1794-1795. The writing is not as adventurous, nor as thematically focused as

[50] The orchestration of *Uthal* included four horns, and two harps.
[51] Etienne Nicolas Méhul, *Uthal.* A full score was published in 1806 by a partnership of composers that included Boieldieu, Isouard and his friends Kreutzer and Rode. (Facsimile – New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1978).

other later and equally miniature works. But because of their interesting orchestration, the minimal usage of the voices and their focused emphasis on the text, they are very interesting pieces.

Isouard would have been more than familiar with each of these texts. Benigno Zerafa, the *maestro di capella* of the Cathedral of St Paul at Mdina from 1744 to 1787, had composed two settings of all five of the motets, as a series of Responses for Holy Week. These particular works of Zerafa were composed for four voices and organ continuo.[52] Isouard's second teacher, Francesco Azopardi, also composed settings of all five motets between 1782 and 1785 and scored them for four-part chorus and strings, but in accordance with musical performance practice of the period, without violas.

The Latin text of these five motets set by Isouard with English translations is as follows.

The first motet is the first responsory of Good Friday.

Omnes amici miei dereliquerunt me,
et praevaluerunt insidiantes mihi:
tradidit me quem diligebam:
Et terribilibus oculis plaga crudeli percutientes,
aceto potabant me.
V. Inter iniquos projecerunt me,
et non pepercerunt animae meae.
Et terribilibus.

All my friends have forsaken me, and mine enemies have prevailed against me: he whom I loved hath betrayed me.
Mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me;
he breaketh me with breach upon breach : and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.
V. I am numbered with the transgressors; and my life is not spared.

The second motet, *In Monte Oliveti* is the first responsory of Maundy Thursday.

In Monte Oliveti oravit ad Patrem:
Pater si fieri potest, transeat a me calix iste:
Spiritus quidem promptus est, caro autem infirma.
V. (Mark 14: 38). *Vigilate et orate ut no intretis in tentationem.*

[52] This use of 4 voices and organ continuo was a favourite of Zerafa, and was utilised by him in his Requiem, the manuscript of which is found in the Wignacourt Museum, Rabat. A modern edition of this Requiem was completed by Richard Divall.

At the Mount of Olives He prayed unto the Father:
Father, if it be possible,
Let this cup pass from Me.
The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.
V. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

The third Motet is the ninth Responsion of Good Friday.

O vos omnes, qui transitis per viam, attendite et videte:
Si est dolor similis sicut dolor meus.
V. *Attendite universi populi, et videte dolorem meum.*

O all ye that pass by, behold and see
If there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.
V. O all ye nations, behold, and see my sorrow.

The fourth is the second responsory of Good Friday.

Velum templi scissum est,
Et omnis terra tremuit: latro de cruce clamabat, dicens:
Memento mei Domine, dum veneris in regnum tuum.
V. *Petrae scissae sunt, et monumenta aperta sunt,*
et multa corpora sanctorum, qui dormierant, surrexerunt.

The veil of the Temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom,
and all the earth did quake:
the thief on the cross cried, saying:
Lord, remember me when Thou comest into thy kingdom!
V. The rocks were rent, and the graves were opened,
and many bodies of the saints, who slept, arose.

The last motet in this series is the second of Maundy Thursday.

Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem:
sustinete hic, et vigilate mecum:
Nunc videbitis turbam, quae circumdabit me:
Vos fugam capietis,
et ego vadam immolari pro vobis.
V. *Ecce approquinquat hora,*
et Filius hominis tradetur in manus peccatorum.

My Soul is sorrowful, even unto death:
tarry ye here and watch with me
yet a little while, and ye shall see the multitude close Me in.
Ye shall flee; and I will go to be offered (as) a sacrifice for you.
V. Behold, the hour is at hand,

and the Son of man will be betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Commentary.

In the first motet, *Omnes amici miei*, there is no tempo direction. The depressive nature of the text is reflected in the key of G minor and the 'enemy' is painted in tortuous semiquaver weaving patterns in the violas and the voices. The text *Et terribilibus oculis* is amplified by a series of *forte* semi and demisemiquavers in the strings. In contrast, the verso, *Inter iniquos* is given in the first four phrases to solo voices, before the *Dal Segno* returns to the *forte* passage mentioned above (bar 27).

The second motet, in F major, *In Monte Oliveti* is also in a *Dal Segno al Fine* format. In the middle verso, the liturgical responsory reverts to the usual passage from St Mark's Gospel (14: 38). In bar eleven and twelve the composer writes these two bars for soprano and tenor in alternative thirds, meaning either an *ossia*, or a splitting of the vocal parts. The latter I think is unlikely, as it is nowhere to be found in any of the other motets. The rising and descending phrases on the text *Pater si fieri* amplifies the power and meaning of the prayer from Jesus to the Father.

O vos omnes, the third motet in the series is in the same *Dal Segno* pattern, but comes in two distinct time and tempo signatures. Starting in a E flat major *Largo* in common time, the mood and the tempo unexpectedly changes on the text *Si est dolor* at the *Dal Segno* indication, into a 3/8 time signature, but with no tempo indication. The text *Dolor meus* shows some emotional writing for the voices and also some imaginative chromaticism reflective of the words. The Verse in C minor, with its appeal to view the sufferings of Christ, musically confronts the listener with that request, before returning to the dominant for the *Dal Segno*.

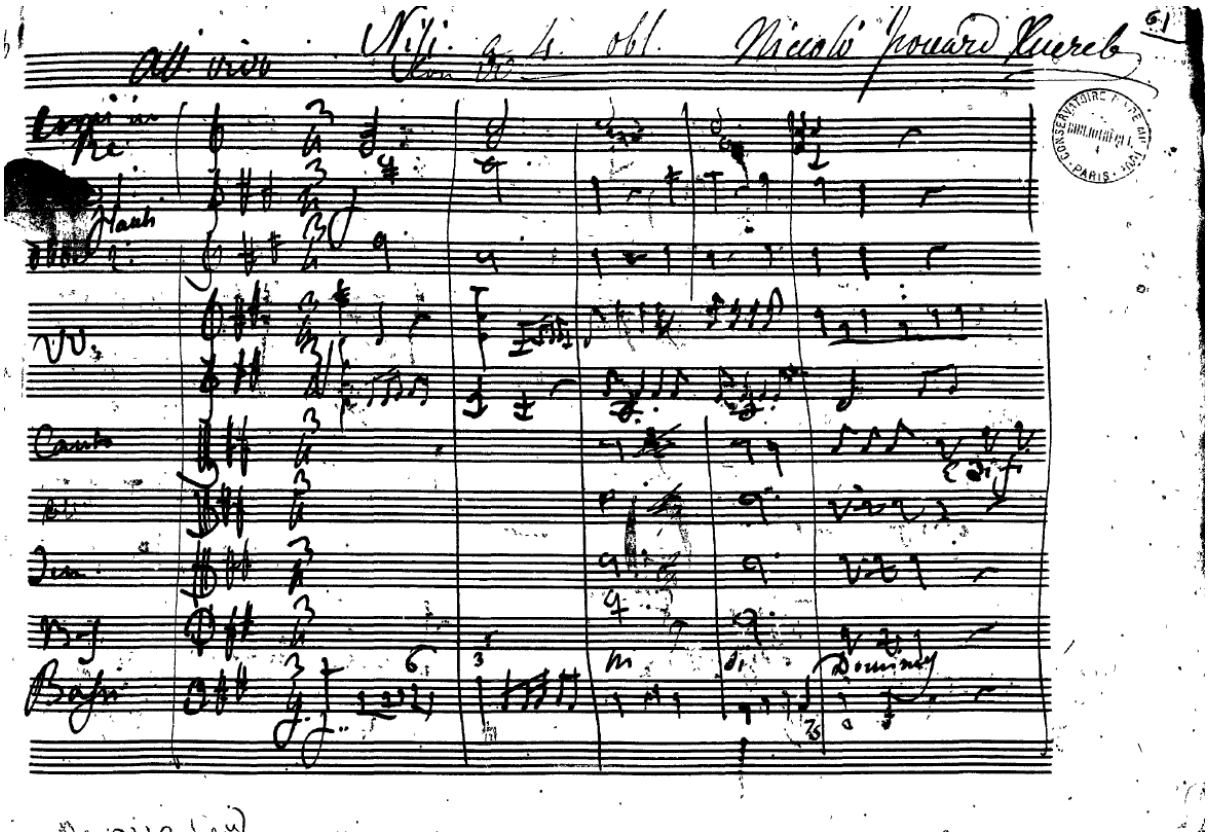
The fourth and most dramatic of the motet texts - *Velum temple scissum est,* is descriptively interpreted by Isouard. In an obvious but editorial *Allegro*, the rending of the veil of the temple is ferocious, and the composer paints the bodies of the saints, as they arise from their graves in ascending and then descending octave scales. The *Memento mei Domine* is very moving with its chromatic twists and emotional phrasing, and the verso in C minor,

given to the bass soloist, maintains the dramatic momentum of the work, leading into the *Dal Segno*.

The final motet, *Tristis anima mea,* combines all of the four voices for the first time. It is a beautiful and emotional piece of composition in G minor, albeit one in a miniature format. The *Et vigilate* is well evoked with a *piano* interweaving of the voices, and then later in a soft fanfare like evocation, leading into the *Nunc videbitis turbam* in a contrasting *forte*. The work ends on a return to the text of the opening line. The *verso* (Matthew 26:45) is given to the alto solo, with a most effective series of suspensions to the words *tradetur in manus peccatorum*.

These five early works, composed as a series in miniature, are most effective and innovative musical statements, aimed at delivering the powerful and emotional message of these Holy Week texts.

24. Nisi Dominus.



Place and date of composition

Composed in 1796, presumably on Malta.

Text and Liturgical function

Psalm 126(127).

Instrumental/vocal forces

Flute I and II, oboe I and II, horns I and II in D, strings and organ continuo with soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices – the voices are utilised both as soloists and as chorus.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 61-72.

The text of *Nisi Dominus aedificaverit* is taken from Psalm 126, in the Vulgate (127), and is sung at Vespers on Sundays. It emphasises the need of reliance on God. The text set by the composer is:

Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum in vanum laboraverunt qui aedificant eam, nisi Dominus custodierit civitatem frustra vigilat qui custodit eam.
Vanum est vobis ante lucem surgere: surgite postquam sederitis qui manducatis panem doloris, cum dederit dilectis suis somnum.
Ecce hereditas Domini filii mercis fructus ventris.
Sicut sagittae in manu potentis ita filii excussorum.
Beatus vir qui implebit desiderium suum ex ipsis ; non confundentur cum loquentur inimicis suis in porta.

Or in English:

Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it:
except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.
It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows:
for so he giveth his beloved sleep.
Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward.
As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man: so are children of the youth.
Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them:
they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.[53]

The psalm at Vespers ends with the lesser Doxology:

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto.
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

This short choral work of 187 bars duration is one of the few sacred works where a date can be assigned. On the final page of the manuscript (p. 71), and under the word *finis,* the date of *2 Juillet 96* is given (2 July 1796). The manuscript is twenty-three pages in length and there is only one tempo direction for the entire work - *Allegro vivo*. The cover page of the work is entitled *Nisi à 4 o[b]bl[igato]. Nicolò Isouard Xuereb*. This is one of the occasional times that Isouard acknowledges the Maltese side of his family. The composer would have been familiar with this text, as his teacher Francesco Azopardi composed no less than six settings of the work between 1777 and 1800. Abos also composed one setting of the text for four-part voices and strings.[54]

The work is scored either for four-part chorus (soprano, alto, tenor and bass) or alternatively four solo vocal lines. It is unclear whether the work, in using the term *à 4 obl[igato],* might be referring either to a quartet of soloists, or alternatively the use of choir,

[53] King James Version.
[54] Bilb Cons S Pietro di Majella, I-Nc. NA0059 Mus. Rel. 6-22.6.9(3).

together with obvious solo sections. Throughout the manuscript there are references on individual vocal lines to the terms *solo* or *soli*.

The manuscript consists of twelve pages composed on twelve stave paper; the top line and the lowest are not written upon. The orchestral layout on the manuscript places the two Corni in Re at the top on a single stave, then Flauto I and II, and Oboe I and II sharing separate lines for each first and second part respectively. This is followed in descending order by Violini I and II, Canto Alto, Tenore and Basso vocal lines, ending with a general Bassi and organ continuo line, with figured bass at the bottom of the page. The figured bass notation for the organ is more extensive here than in some other works, and there are no violas in the score.

The orchestration is for Flauti and Oboe I and II, each first and second parts of these instruments playing unison, and Corni I and II in Re, Violini I and II, and Bassi and Organo. The vocal lines are either for four-part vocal ensemble singing together interspersed with lines in duet form marked *soli* (bar 24), or obviously lines marked *solo* and singing with no other voices (bar 57). In all *soli* or *solo* passages for the voices the dynamics are consistently *piano*, whilst the four-part vocal writing is generally marked *forte*. It is possible that the Flauto I and I and Oboe I and II may be alternative forms of instrumentation, or that each first and second part are to be covered by both instruments. It is simply unclear in the manuscript. At the end of the work Isouard adds the lesser Doxology. The full text which he sets is: *Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.*

Commentary

This short work in D major is a good example of Isouard's later style of composition from his final years on Malta. The woodwind writing is independent of the strings and there are many instances of wide dynamic contrasts. The violin writing displays considerable contrast, from legato quaver passages that are *espressivo* in style, to aggressive semiquaver passages, often with modulations. The appearance of pedal bass passages of quavers with harmonically varied phrases in the upper instruments is a feature of the work.

The solo writing is elegant and reflects the meaning of the text very well, whilst the 'hammer blows' from the orchestra and the choir on the words *In vanum (They labour in vain),* that occur in bars 9 to 11 and 46 to 48 are noteworthy. The bass solo set to the second verse *(Vanum est vobis),* is sensitive in its treatment of the words, and the call of *surgere, surgere* is both strong and affirmative. The section that begins with the words *cum dederit dilectis suis somnum* - the sleep motive in the Latin text, is beautifully realised in a calmly reflective vein in a soprano and tenor duet, through a gently rising series of solo phrases that modulates into B flat major. The work returns to D major with the tutti, to the triumphant text of *Beatus vir*. Interestingly, after the *Gloria Patri*, the final *Amen* from the chorus is *piano* in dynamic, indicating a reverential acceptance of the message of the psalm text, which leads directly into a *forte* orchestral finale.

25. Panis Angelicus.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Panis Angelicus, from St Thomas Aquinas' *Sacris solemniis*.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Flute I and II, oboe I and II, horns I and II in E flat, strings including viola and organ continuo, with soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 36-46.

Isouard's *Panis Angelicus* is a fine piece and possibly a work from his later period on Malta. The title page of the manuscript is inscribed: *Motetti il S[antissimo] S[acramento]* (followed by an unidentified word, *Altram* or *Altaris*), *O Sacrum Convivium Nicolo Isouard Xuereb.* Exactly why Isouard writes *O Sacrum Convivium* on the title page, and not *Panis Angelicus* is a mystery, as the former is quite a separate antiphon from the hymn *Panis Angelicus* itself.

The Latin verse set by Isouard reads:

Panis angelicus fit panis hominum;
Dat panis coelicus figuris terminum :
O res mirabilis!
Manducat Dominum
Pauper servus et humilis.
Alleluia.

The orchestral and vocal forces listed on the first page of the music in descending order are: Corni I and II in E flat, Flauti and Oboe I and II on the same staves, Violini I and II, Viola, then soprano, alto tenor and bass clefs for the singers, but unlisted, followed on the lowest line by Bassi including the organ. There is no figured bass notation on the bassi line, and the work is written on twelve stave paper.

None of the Maltese composers known by Isouard set this hymn of St Thomas Aquinas to music, and there are no settings of this text in the holdings of either the Mdina Cathedral Museum, or the Wignacourt Museum. Isouard could have been inspired to set the hymn through his visit to Naples where he studied. Apart from the Gregorian chant setting, the fashion for composing this text seems to have started with the French composers Camille Saint-Saëns and César Franck.

In this version of the *Panis Angelicus,* only the first verse of the penultimate strophe of St Thomas' *Sacris solemniis* is set to music. This is in a lyrical 3/4 *Andante con moto* setting, ending on the text *Pauper, servus, et humilis*, and followed by an *Alleluia* in a 4/4 *Allegro Vivace*. The orchestration of the piece is forward looking. The unison flute and oboes and the pair of horns are all written independent of the writing for the strings and the vocal parts.

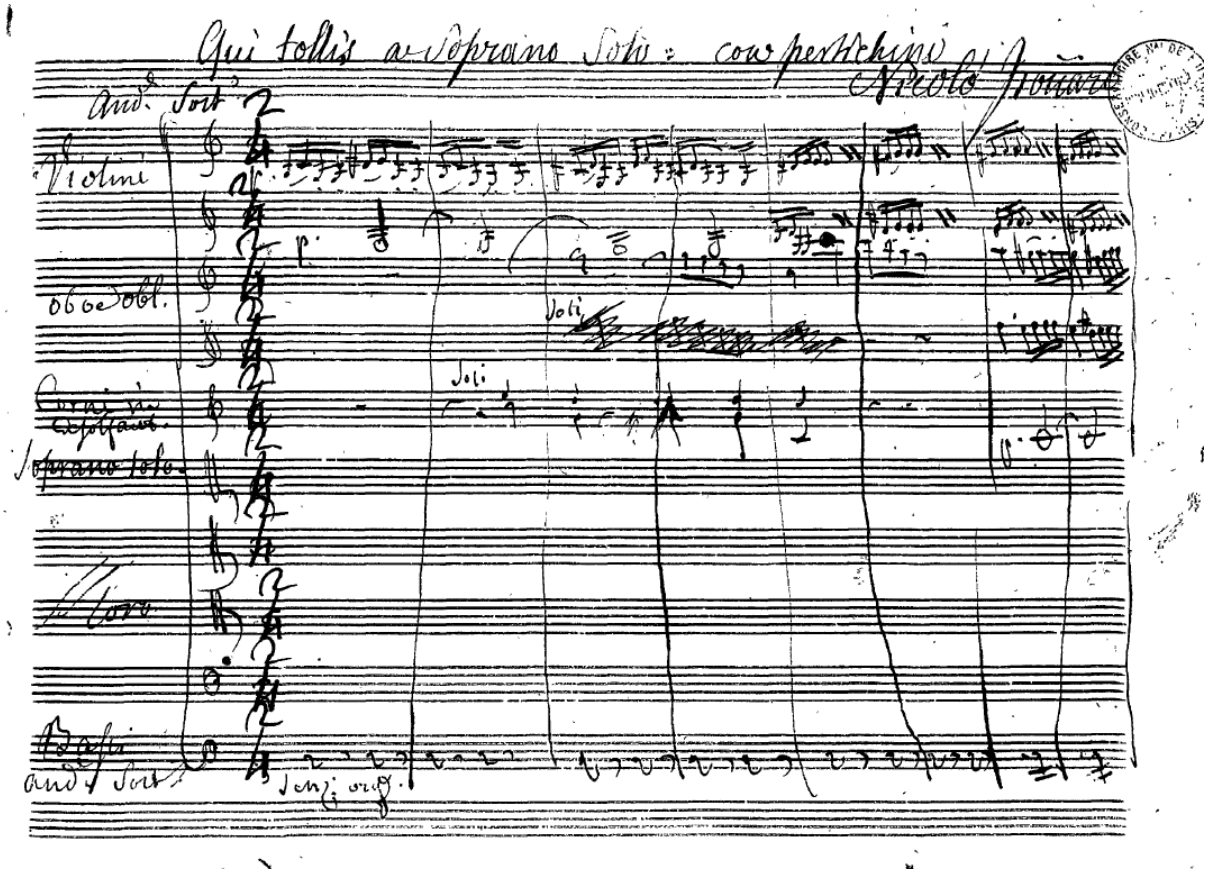
Commentary

After an opening phrase by the solo soprano, the four vocal lines unite on the *fit panis hominum* and remain so until the *O res mirabilis* where the vocal texture becomes more sparse vocally, solo in style and lyrical. One feature of the orchestration throughout is woodwind chords placed on the offbeat, in opposition to the strings and horns on the beat.

The emotion in the text *figuris terminum* and *O res mirabilis* is amplified by the use of a descending phrase in an augmented fourth. In contrast to the Latin text, Isouard uses no comma punctuation after the words, which generally read *Pauper, servus, et humilis*, whilst he uses a personal colloquial spelling of *celicus* instead of the more correct *caelicus* or *coelicus*.[55] The final setting of the *Alleluia* in *Allegro vivace* alternates from triumphant and repeated uses of the word, to gentle interweaving between the various vocal lines. Often the soprano and tenor voices are heard in duet, followed by the soprano and alto voices, after which the finale of the score resolves to *forte tutti* passages for all four vocal lines.

[55] I have used the spelling *coelicus* in the editions to the thesis.

26. Qui Tollis for soprano solo con pertichini



Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Qui tollis peccata mundi, from the *Gloria* of the Ordinary of the Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in C basso, strings and organ continuo without violas, and alto solo, soprano, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 158-179.

This work is another *pezzo staccato*, taken from the *Gloria* of the Mass.

This work is an extended aria for soprano castrato with short interventions by a smaller choral group or three other soloists. Dun Gwann Azzopardi (of the Wignacourt Museum,

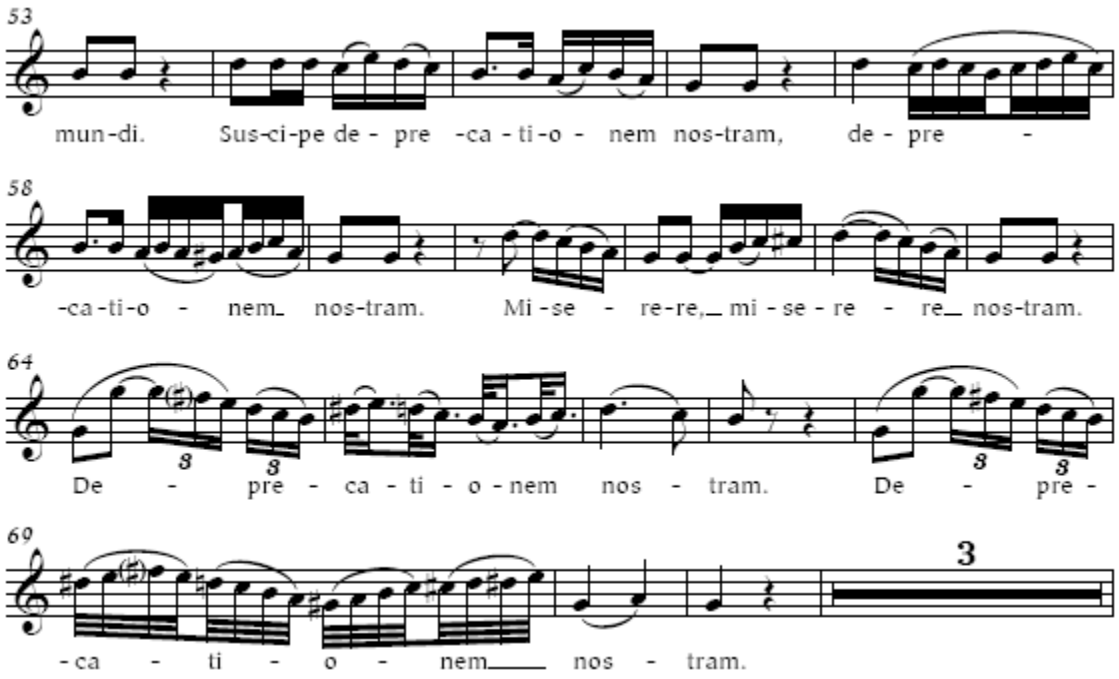
Rabat, Malta) suggested that the word *pertichini* referred to brief interjections from a smaller group of singers or by a voice, and in viewing the score this would make total sense. In the 18th century a *pertichino* was the term for a *comprimario* singer. At the time the term was generally used in an operatic context. It appears in the titles of a few works of Antonio Salieri, and was also used by Gaetano Donizetti, who wrote an *aria con pertichini*.

The front page of the score is inscribed *Qui tollis a soprano solo: con pertichini Nicolò Isoũard.* Unusually there is a tilde (~) accent over the *ũ* in the surname.[56] The musical forces are listed on this first page of music in this descending order: Violini I and II, Oboe *obl[igati]* I and II, Corni in Do bassi, soprano solo and clefs for alto, tenor and bass voices, with the lowest line reserved for the Bassi and Organ continuo. The aria is in two parts; firstly an *Andante sostenuto* in 2/4 in C major, followed by an *Allegro vivo* in common time, also in C major. There is an orchestral introduction to the work with a legato solo oboe, later joined by the second oboe echoing the violin semiquaver passages that begin the piece.

Commentary

From its first entry the solo soprano copies the oboe solo, and gradually elements of *coloratura* are introduced into the solo vocal part. The short interjections from the other three voices begin on the *Miserere nobis* in bar 41. Gradually the speed of the coloratura increases from semiquavers to triplets, and eventually demisemiquavers, indicating that it was written for a voice of limpid but rapid agility.

[56] This ~ accent over the surname, as Isoũard is missing in the music score, as my music editing programme (Sibelius), will not allow it. The only other use of this symbol is in the Cospicua Mass, edition number 36.



The solo oboe returns before the soprano repeats the opening vocal phrases, again to the *Qui tollis* text. The *Allegro* section of the aria begins at the text of *Qui sedes ad dexteram* - again for the solo soprano. Here the voice is supported by fanfare like phrases from the woodwinds and horns, until the *Miserere nobis* allows the voice to expand and erupt into a difficult but well written ten bar phrase of coloratura triplets.

After a vocal cadenza point in bar 206 to the text *ad dexteram Patris,* the main theme of the *Allegro* section returns, repeating the material heard before in the *Qui sedes* text. In bar 237 and also in bar 245 Isouard writes a vocal jump for the soprano soloist of two octaves, from low C to top C. This rarely happens in vocal music, and surely would have been effectively sung at the time and in this context on Malta by a superior castrato technique. This brings the aria to a triumphant conclusion.

27. Quoniam tu solus for solo bass.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

The *Quoniam tu solus*, from the *Gloria* of the Ordinary of the Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in E flat, strings with violas and organ continuo, with solo bass voice.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 178-193.

The *Quoniam tu solus* is also a *pezzo staccato*, being a section from the penultimate part of the *Gloria* of the Mass.

This extended aria of 228 bars for bass solo is a mature and well-orchestrated work. The oboes and horns are written independently of the strings, and at times accompany the voice in fanfare-like motifs with minimal activity from the strings. Written on twelve stave manuscript paper, the work is inscribed on the title page as: *Quoniam Solo di Basso con Oboe e Corni obligatiss[imi]: Nicolo Isouard Orig[inale].* The performing forces are listed in descending order as: Corni I and II in E flat, Oboes I and II, Violini I and II, Viola, Basso and Bassi with organ continuo and figured bass.

Commentary

An extended orchestral introduction of forty-four bars announces the prominence that both the oboes and the horns will play throughout the aria, with passages in thirds from the oboes, answered by fanfare quaver phrases in sixths and thirds from the horns. As in several other works for solo bass, Isouard often uses the upper strings in unison with the bassi line, while the voice and the woodwinds are given independent phrases.

Well written for the bass voice, the range called for from the singer is from low A flat to a top E flat. The vocal writing tends toward longer extended phrases, and without any real coloratura. Here the voice creates the drama of the text, in sweeping ascending and descending phrases, often over an octave in range and containing syncopations. This ensures that the voice can vocally declaim the text with strength, without having to lighten the sound in order to accommodate any coloratura. Several times Isouard reintroduces the oboes phrases in thirds above an Alberti bass in the violins, as an answer to phrases from the voice.[57]

As in his *Te Deum* and in the bass aria in the *Stabat Mater,* Isouard again utilises unison strings to accompany the bass soloist. At times he uses the entire string section as a bass continuo line without figures, supporting the solo voice (bar 45 onwards and 137 onwards). He also uses the unison strings in the same manner in the orchestral introduction, but as a general *unisoni* bass accompaniment to the two oboes.

Toward the end of the aria (bar 201), Isouard introduces a musical device that he uses in other finale passages involving the bass voice. He writes the voice in the upper register as a pedal point, whilst utilising a rising pattern of crochets and occasionally quavers in the tutti bassi as a counter weight. In Isouard's hands it is an effective dramatic tool. The work ends engagingly, with the horns and oboes exchanging question and answer phrases.

[57] First used extensively by the Venetian keyboard composer Domenico Alberti (1710-1740), this repeated pattern of thirds and fifths, or often fourths and sixths, had become a mainstay of music of the classical era, particularly in the left hand of keyboard works and in the second violin line of orchestra works.

28. Requiem – Two Fragments

Fragment 1.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Fragment – *Luceat eis*, from the Requiem Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Po, Res 182. Fragment.

This prayer for the dead recurs many times in the liturgy for the dead; as an introit, or as a responsory, and also replaces the *Gloria Patri* at the end of each Psalm in the Office of the Dead. The text set to music in this first fragment reads:

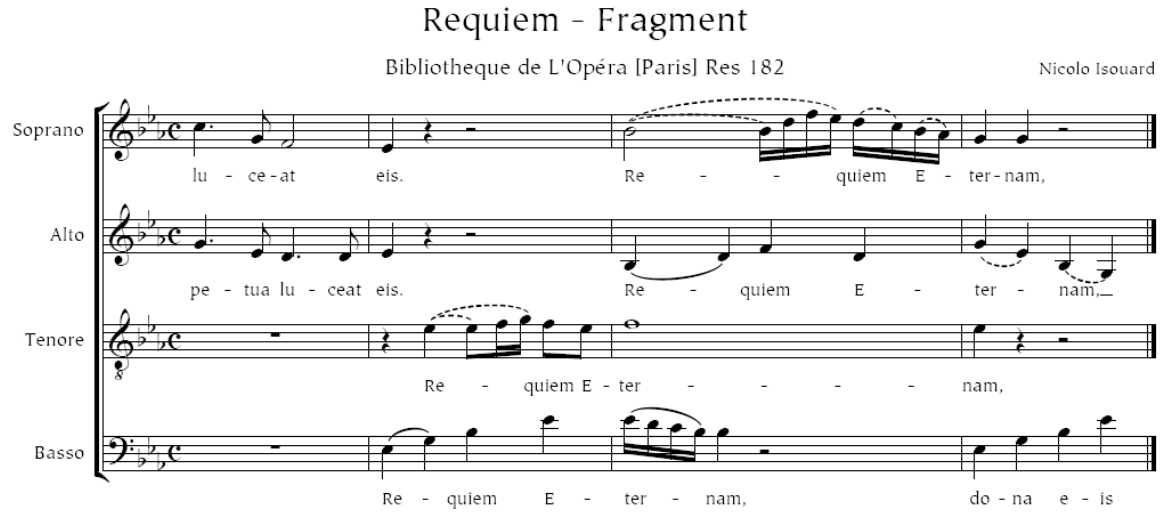
Luceat eis, Requiem eternam, dona eis....

This short fragment of four bars for soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices has been held for many years in the above library museum of the Palais Garnier, the old Paris Opéra. It was originally catalogued in the 'old system' as number 71. At some stage in the nineteenth century, it was secretly removed from the museum by the Librarian, Aimé-Ambroise-Simon Leborne (1797-1866).

Leborne had had a favoured career, being a student at the Paris Conservatoire de Musique studying under Luigi Cherubini. He came second in 1818 in the *Prix de Rome* Competition, but was awarded the first prize in 1820 for his cantata *Sophonisbe*. He taught at the Conservatoire and was appointed librarian at the *Opéra* in 1829, and later in the same post

in the Chapel of Emperor Napoleon III. He was named a Chevalier of the *Légion d'Honneur* in 1853.

This little manuscript possibly became entangled in his home papers, for it appeared in the listings for an auction of Leborne's papers in 1867 after his death in 1866, from where it was returned to the *Opéra* Museum Library.[58] I am including this short fragment here in the text, rather than in the music editions accompanying this thesis.



Fragment 2.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Fragment of the *Mors Stupebit* of the Requiem Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and I, clarinet I and II in B flat, bassoon, horns I and II in E flat, strings with violas and organ continuo, with solo bass voice.

[58] Email from Jean-Michel Vinciguerra, Music Librarian at the Bibliothèque-musée de l'Opéra – 3 VIII 2011.

The source

Provenance: M. Thierry Bodin; 'Les Autographes', Paris.

This is one verse of the Sequence entitled *Dies Irae* chanted in the Mass for the Dead. The short Latin text of this surviving holograph fragment is:

Mors stupebit, repeated twice by the bass soloist.

This short manuscript of 20 bars length is currently held in the collection of the prominent French antiquarian dealer, Thierry Bodin, who most kindly provided me with a reproduction. The manuscript is four pages in length and in the composers own hand. The first page is untitled and is written on ten stave manuscript paper. The work calls for the following instrumental and vocal forces, which are listed in descending order on the first page as: Corni I and II in E flat, Clarinetti I and II in B flat, Oboe I and II di Ripieni, Violini I and II, Viola, Fagotti, Basso, and Bassi e organo.

Attached to the manuscript is a note from the composer Ferdinando Paer (1771-1839). The text of this certificate of authenticity reads: *Fragment d'une partition d'une Messe de Requiem, de Nicolo Isouard, Maitre de Chapelle de l'Eglise de St Jean de Jérusalem à Malthe, la 1 Messe composée, par Nicolo et écrite de sa main.* Paer, born in Parma had worked as *Maestro di Capella* to the Royal Saxon Court in Dresden until he was appointed by Napoleon I as his own *maître de chapelle* in 1806. From the time of that appointment he lived in the French capital until his death, and was well known to Isouard.

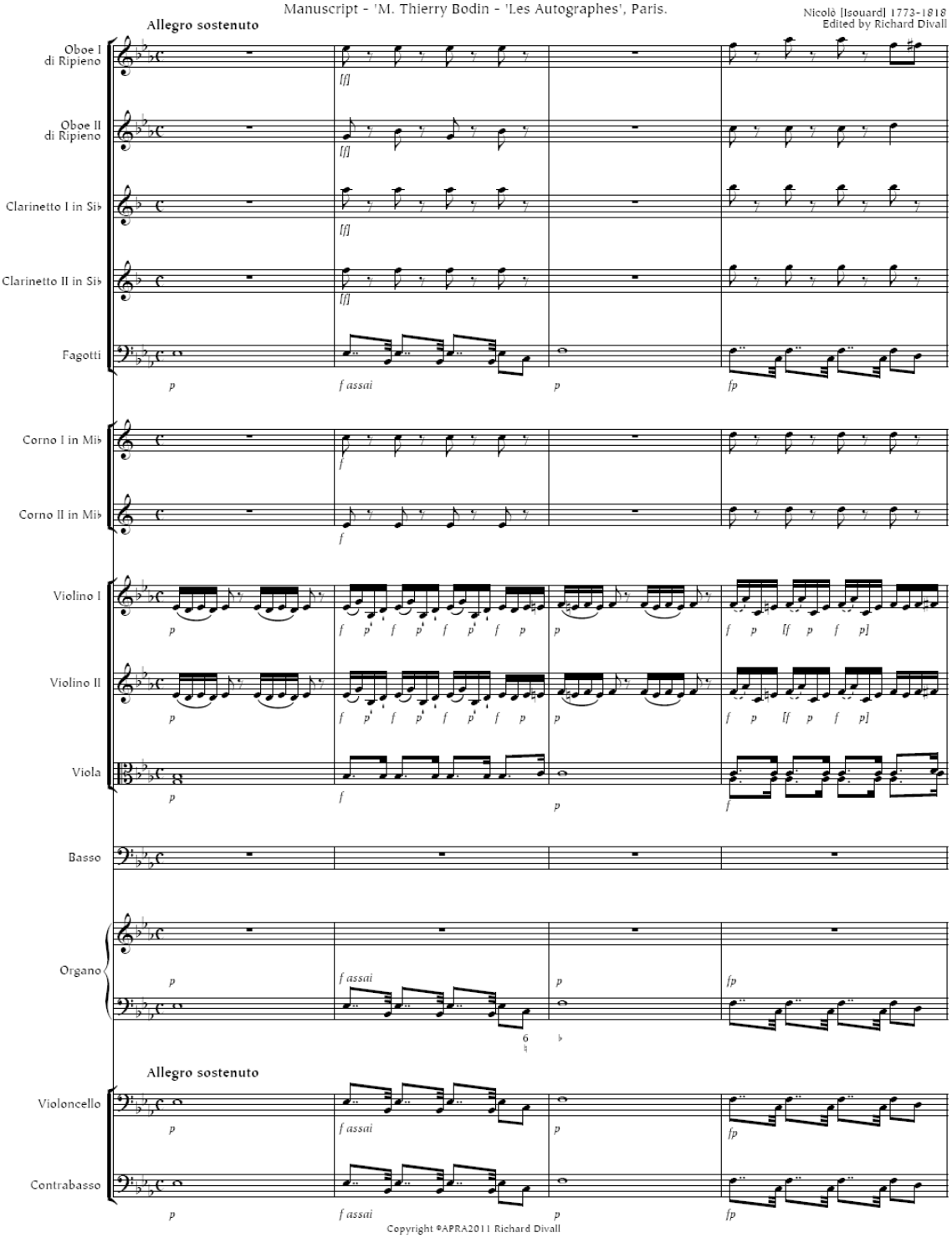
Paer's assessment of the manuscript being the first Mass composed by Isouard is not borne out by the more mature compositional style of this short holograph, which either dates from Isouard's later period on Malta, or from the years 1800 to 1818 when he lived in Paris.

The fragment is set for solo bass voice, and on examination these opening bars seem to be a most promising start. The bass vocal line is majestic in its writing, and the orchestral accompaniment that supports it has a mature quality in its style. I suspect that there may be other missing fragments of this work in France which might eventually reappear.

Requiem - Mors stupebit

Manuscript - 'M. Thierry Bodin - 'Les Autographes', Paris.

Nicolò [Isouard] 1773-1818
Edited by Richard Divall



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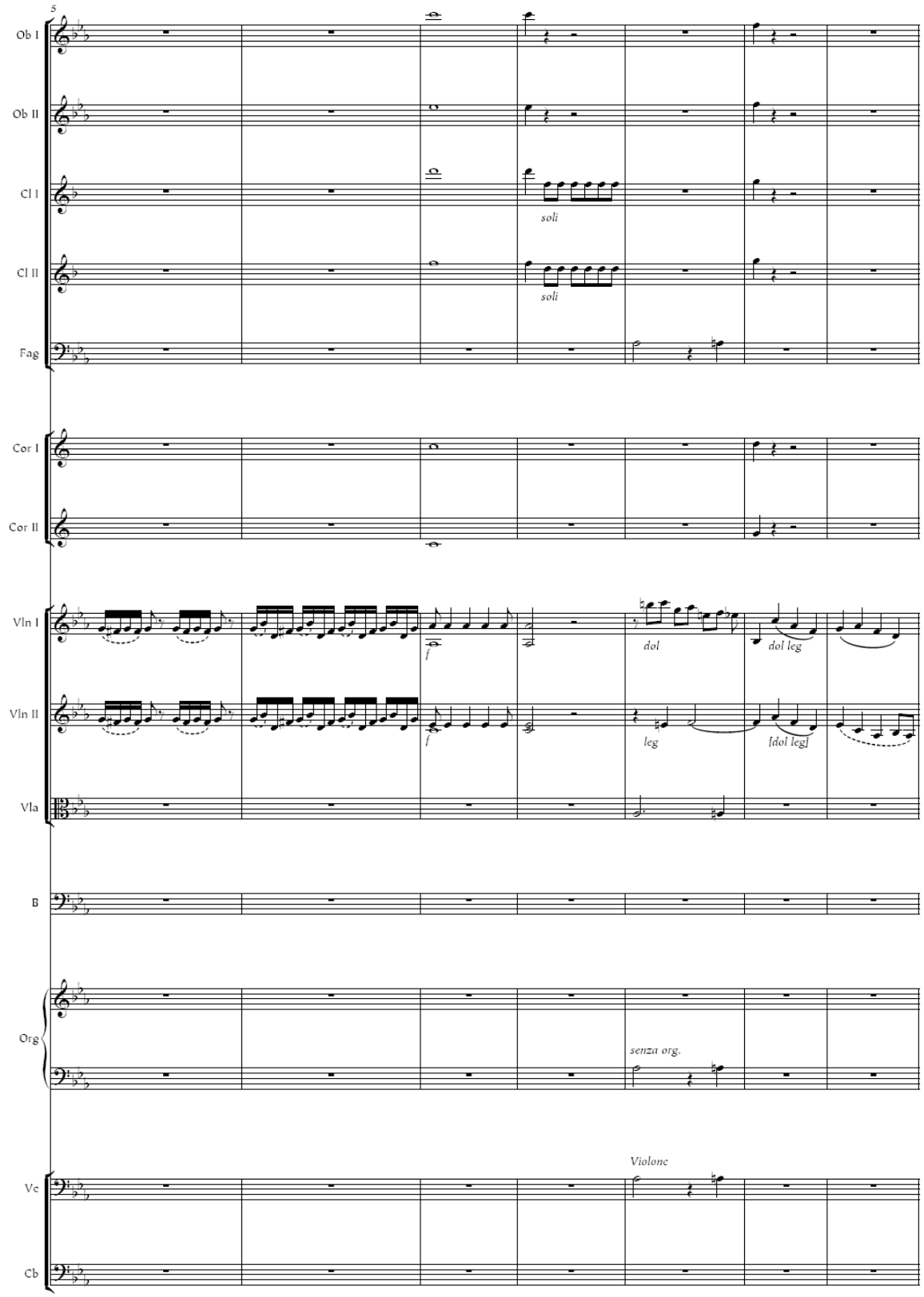
5
Ob I
Ob II
Cl I
soli
Cl II
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Cor II
Vln I
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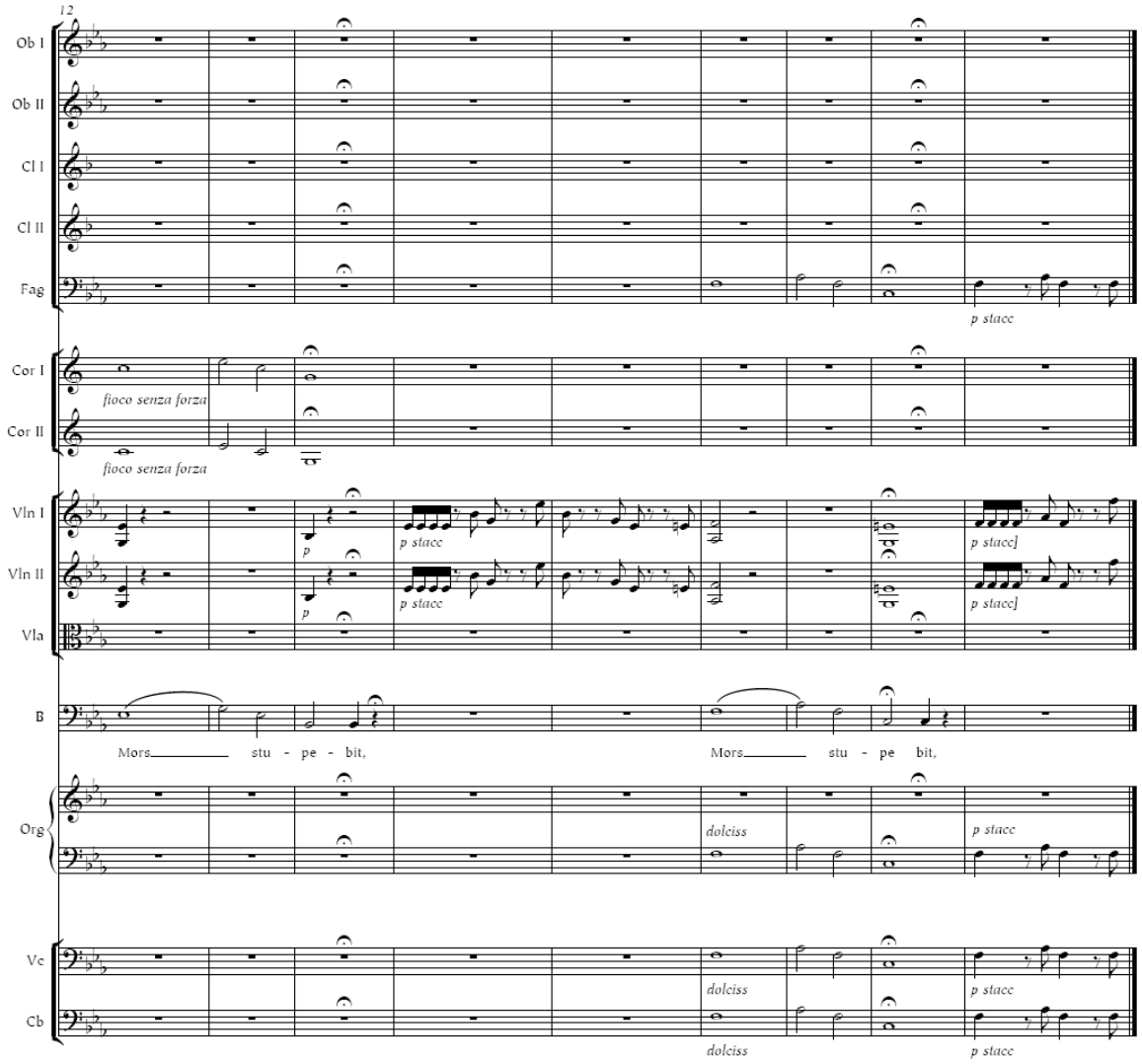


Neither of the above two fragments of this Requiem bears any resemblance to Isouard's re-orchestration of the Requiem in E flat major of Niccolò Jommelli.

29. Salve Regina à 3.

Place and date of composition

Unknown, but possibly dated on stylistic grounds to 1793-1794.

Text and Liturgical function

Marian Antiphon – *Salve Regina*.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Violin I and II, bassi with organ continuo, with soprano, alto and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 102-104.

One of the four and possibly the most endearing of the Marian Antiphons, the *Salve Regina* dates from the 11th century, and its earliest source comes from the *Codex Augiensis* in the Badische Landesbibliothek in Karlsruhe.[59] This antiphon achieved great popularity with English, Flemish and Spanish composers in the 15th century and is regularly sung in its Gregorian chant form throughout the world. Isouard sets the complete antiphon text to music. There are several settings of this text by other Maltese composers of the period. These include Girolamo Abos *Salve Regina* for soprano and organ.[60] Benigno Zerafa composed one version in 1764,[61] and Francesco Azopardi in 1791.[62]

Isouard's *Salve Regina* is written on five pages of the twelve stave manuscript paper, and is scored for soprano, alto and bass voices with strings and organ continuo, but without violas. The inscription on the first page of the manuscripts simply reads: *Salve a 3 di Nicolo Isouard*, and the musical forces required are listed as: Violini I and II, with unlisted soprano, alto and bass clefs for the voices and Basso with organ figured bass. Composed in F major and in a simple 2/4 time signature, the work is a short miniature of only eighty-seven bars length. As

[59] Badische Landesbibliothek, Karlsruhe. Cat. F.42v, col, 1.
[60] Girolamo Abos, *Salve Regina*. Archivio Monastero di S. Gregorio Armeno, Naples, Italy.
[61] Benigno Zerafa, *Salve Regina*. SSB and organ. Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta. Music Ms 330.
[62] Francesco Azopardi, *Salve Regina*. S, 2 vl, 2 traversieri, 2 cor, fag, cb, org. Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta. Music Ms 584.

in Isouard's other short antiphons, the composer puts a great deal of musical detail into amplifying the meaning of the text, and this work is no exception.

Commentary

The voices repeat the violin statement that opens the work, which leads to a *forte* climax on the *Salve* - this comes at the end of the first verse. The entry on the text *Ad te clamamus* appropriately moves into C minor, and then a quasi-fugal entry for all three voices on the *gementes et flentes*, and repeated on the *in hac lacrimarum valle*. Plaintive semiquaver phrases accompanying the soprano and alto voices, lead to a pause at the end of the second verse.

In a sudden modulation to E flat major, Isouard makes a positive plea for intercession, sought through words *Eia, ergo, advocata nostra*. Later, in the *Et Jesum*, *benedictum*, (where Isouard spells *Iesum* beginning with the letter J), the music again moves rapidly and radically from B flat major to A major before ending the verse on a pause in the latter key.

The final and reverential prayer of the antiphon modulates to a gentle F major, where commencing with the alto, the other two voices join in on the final *O dulcis Virgo Maria*. In Isouard's output I would stylistically date this work around the period 1793-4, and therefore it would be a relatively early composition, but none the less an effective and moving one.

30. Stabat Mater.

Place and date of composition

Unknown, but probably composed before 1791.

Text and Liturgical function

Five verses of the Hymn – The Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *Stabat Mater*.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Violin I and II, bass and organ continuo, with soprano I and II, alto and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp.22-24, and 73-79.

Isouard sets only five verses to music of the Sequence or Hymn *Stabat Mater dolorosa,* in honour of the Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin. These are listed below and are very early works, probably predating the *Te Deum* of 1791. Eventual examination of the watermarks of the manuscript paper might assist in determining the possible date of composition.

Attributed to either Pope innocent III (1160/61 – 1216) or Jacopone da Todi (c.1230-1306), this was a text that was very dear to baroque composers. Settings of the *Stabat Mater* were made by Vivaldi, Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, Alessandro and Domenico Scarlatti, and Marc Antoine Charpentier. Its popularity did not end with the baroque period and great composers such as Joseph Haydn, Rossini, Schubert, Dvorak and Verdi all composed music to the text. The only setting by a Maltese composer is the well-known work by Girolamo Abos. This, alone amongst Maltese sacred music, has been published in an excellent modern edition by Joseph Vella Bondin.[63] Manuscripts survive in at least six European archives.

The five movements that survive from Isouard's *Stabat Mater* are found in two locations in the manuscript MS 8113B - on pages seventy-three to seventy-nine (*Stabat Mater, Quis est homo and Pro peccatis*), whilst the *Quando corpus* and *Quae moerebat* are found on pages

[63] Girolamo Abos, *Stabat Mater*. ed. Joseph Vella Bondin, *Recent Researches in the Music of the Classical Era*, vol. 68 (Middleton, Wisconsin: A-R Editions, 2003).

twenty-two to twenty-four. I suggest that all five excerpts are the earliest complete movements that we have from Isouard's pen. The *Quando corpus* and *Quae moerebit* are bound out of order.

There are two anomalies in this manuscript. In the first group of three movements, there are two pages of an unrelated piece of forty bars duration, in either short score or a keyboard exercise. It makes little musical sense and is not included in the edition. Its inclusion wedged in amongst the *Stabat Mater,* and the fact that it is written on ten stave paper allows one to hypothesise that some of the other works written on similar ten stave paper may possibly come from the same early period of Isouard's life. I should mention that one of the fragments of the unfinished Requiem, which appears a later work, is also written on ten stave paper. However, it should be noted that the *Quando corpus* is written on the more familiar twelve stave manuscript paper. When comparing these early sacred works written on the ten stave paper, and some of the manuscript papers from the early two extant operas of Isouard dating from 1794, I hoped that a pattern might emerge that could provide a possible chronological system for these undated works. But this was not the case.

The five movements are scored for soprano I and II, contralto solo and bass with instrumental lines for violins I and II and for a general bassi line, but one with only a few figured bass notations. The title page has the following inscription in Latin, as if to be a reminder of the text of the second verse. This reads: *Stabat, Cuius animam gementem, contristatam et dolentem pertransivit gladius. O quam.* The writing of all five movements is rudimentary and that is one reason for suggesting that these short works are student compositions - possibly better termed juvenilia. There are elementary faults in the accidentals, and the writing for the voices, except in the *Quanto corpus*, is simplistic, with the soprano voices generally being written in thirds.

Commentary

The opening *Stabat Mater* is for a trio of vocal soloists – soprano I and II and bass. In the first twenty-five bars for the violins, (both marked *con sordini*), the tessitura is unusually high. Isouard writes an *'8vb'* at the beginning of bar 26 and these instruments then descend

to a level where they will sensibly blend with the voices. Apart from a few harmonic infidelities, the writing is uninspired and pedestrian.

In the manuscript (p.23), the *Quae moerebat* for the two sopranos begins without either time or key signature.[64] Obviously in B flat major, the opening bar of the violins has been written one tone too high - a danger when one is composing in several different clefs. Again the two soprano voices are generally written in thirds. The third vignette, the *Quis est homo*, is a fine but short piece for alto voice. The vocal line is entitled 'contralto' and here the alto clef is introduced for the first time into the work. It is an expressive piece and emotionally interesting.

There follows a perfunctory bass solo, *Pro peccatis suae gentis* which is in 3/4 time and in C major. On the words *et flagellis subditum* Isouard writes for the voice on the bottom of the stave, so as to amplify the bitterness and cruelty of the text. In bar 26 the composer marks the violin II part *col basso*, although it is unclear if this indication still applies on the final page, as that instrument would go out of its range. Therefore the final bar of violin two has been editorially notated *colla voce* with the first violin.

The fifth and final surviving movement is the *Quando corpus morietur*, the final stanza of the *Stabat Mater* prayer of Our Lady of Sorrows. It is also musically the most convincing of the five musical vignettes. Written *alla breve,* and in the dark key of G minor, Isouard shows some of the magic of his emotional musical imagery in the setting of the text - the three voices alternating between soft prayer and *forte* repetition of the text. The interweaving of the three voices on the word *paradiso* is particularly effective, and the work modulates and ends in the uplifting key of B flat major. In bar 41, the direction of *dal segno* is written over the pause.

[64] Isouard spells the Latin *Quae moerebat*, rather than the traditional *maerebat*.

31. Suscepimus Deus

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Psalm 47: 10. Gradual or Introit for the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Candlemass, February 2).

Instrumental/vocal forces

Clarinet I and II in B flat, bassoon, horns I and II in E flat, violins I and II, violas I and II, bassi and organ continuo, with soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 220-228.

These words to the *Suscepimus Deus*, taken from verse ten of Psalm 47, are adopted as a Gradual for the Feast of the Purification of Our Lady, celebrated on 2 February. The Latin text set by the composer reads:

Suscepimus, Deus, misericordiam tuam in medio templi tui:
secundum nomen tuum, Deus, ita et laus tua in fines terrae.

Or in English:

We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy temple:
according to Thy Name, O God,
so also is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth.

This short *motetto* of only forty-nine bars survives in a full score on the twelve stave ruled paper, eleven pages in length, together with three single pages of individual vocal parts, for soprano, alto and tenor. The inscription on the separate title page of the work is *Suscepimus. Motetto a 8. Voci con 4 ad libitum orig[inale]. Nicolo Isoüard Maltese.* This inscription is interesting, in that the work can either be sung by eight voices, being four soloists and four extra voices for the tutti passage, or by four solo voices throughout. Again we see the pattern of Isouard signing his surname with the diaeresis over the *ü*, and the term *Maltese* in describing his nationality.

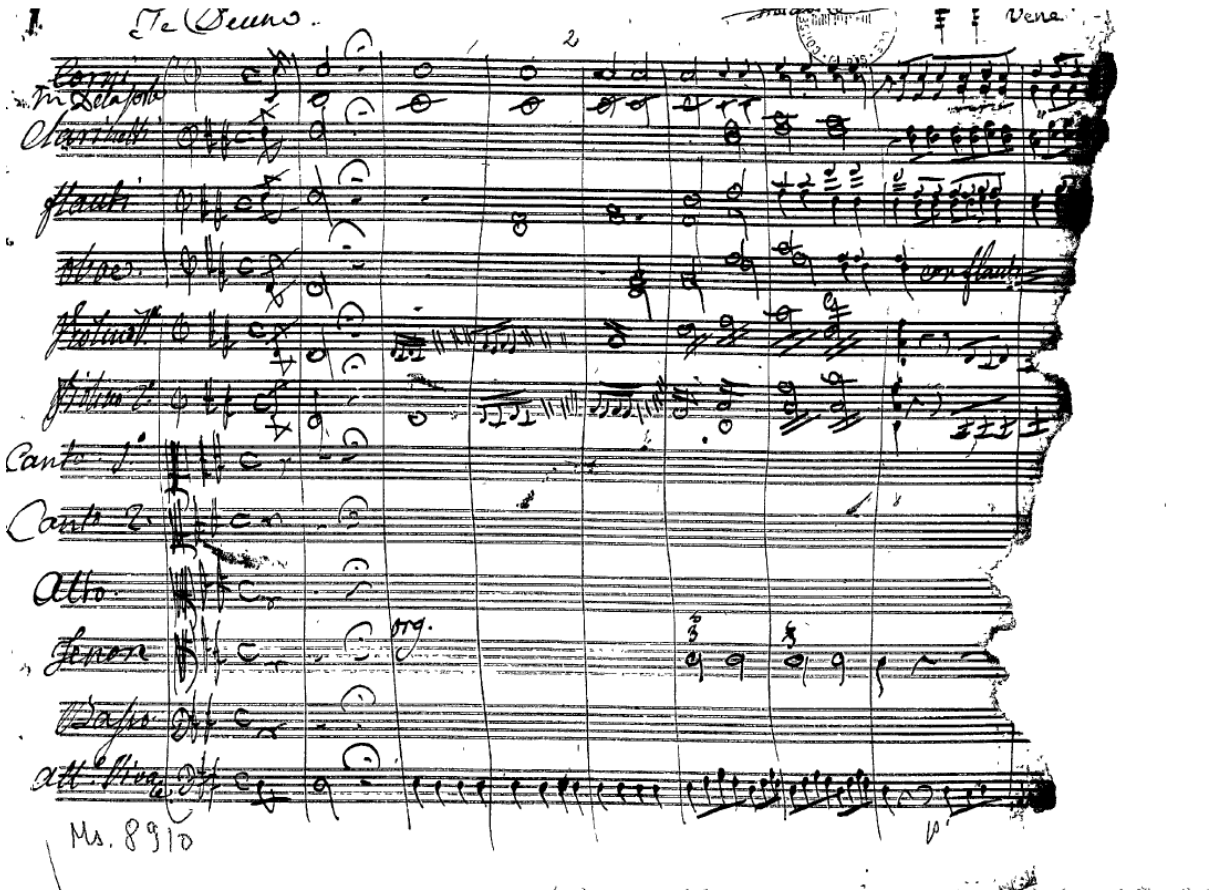
The list of the performing forces on the first page of the music in descending order is as follows: Violini I and II, Clarini in B (meaning Clarinetti I and II), Corni I and II in E flat, Fagotti, Violas *[divisi],* Soprani, Alti, Tenori, Bassi Cantanti, and Bassi with organ continuo and figured bass. This listing is in itself interesting, showing Isouard writing again for a pair of clarinets, which he terms *clarini*. There is a separate *Faggoti* line, although the bassoons play unison throughout the score. The manuscript is very detailed in the instructions for the voices, such as *soli, solo* and *tutti*.

Whilst settings of Psalm 47 are numerous, ranging from the original Gregorian chant through to compositions by Guillaume de Machaut and William Byrd, I have been unable to trace any works by other Maltese composers of this period who set this psalm text.

Commentary

The work, whilst composed in common time, is mainly set in 12/8 throughout the score, with the clarinets and the divided violas often doubling. There is always an interesting accompaniment from the violins, supporting the voices. There is nothing special about the setting of the music to the text, apart from the obvious moments for *forte* and *piano* phrases. There is however, a four bar passage for solo bass, tenor and finally soprano, on the text *Secundum nomen tuum*, which calls for some agility from the two male soloists. It is a charming but short piece of music.

32. Te Deum – 1791



Place and date of composition

The work is dated 1791 in the dedication, and the place of composition is probably Malta.

Text and Liturgical function

Te Deum – a Hymn of thanksgiving.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Flute I and II, oboe I and II, clarinet I and II in C, horns I and II in D, violin I and II and bassi with organ continuo. Soprano I and II, alto, tenor and bass voices - all of which are utilised as both soloists and chorus.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8910. Pages 1-72.

Written on twelve stave paper, this hymn of thanksgiving is the most problematic work in the entire collection of Isouard's sacred music held in the Bibliothèque Nationale, in Paris.

The reason for this is that the manuscript has either been fire or tear, or otherwise damaged at the outer right hand edges of the pages, damage that reduces the further one progresses into the volume itself.

Therefore there was a certain amount of reconstruction required in assembling the full performing score. However, this has not been an impossible project, for the preceding and following bars on various instrumental lines provide a clear indication as to what might be expected to have been originally written in the missing bars or half bars. As can be seen in the above facsimile, the angle of the damage itself is contained nearer the lower edges of the manuscript, allowing some portions of the score to be reconstructed, guided by sections from the music visible on the upper staves.

The work is dated to the year 1791 and is dedicated to one of Isouard's obvious benefactors and patrons. The *Commendatore* Frà Paul-Julien Suffren de St Tropez (1730-1809) was the younger brother of the great French naval tactician and admiral, *Le Bailli* Frà Pierre-André Suffren de St Tropez, (1729-1788). An even younger brother, Louis Jerome Suffren, was appointed Bishop of Sisteron and later Bishop of Nevers in 1789. He died in exile in 1796.

The elder Suffren was acknowledged as one of the supreme tacticians in French naval history and served as a young Knight of Malta on Malta. Together with other Knights of Malta he served as an officer in the French Royal Navy in both the American War of Independence and the following Indian Ocean campaigns. On retirement from the Royal French Navy, the elder Suffren became the Ambassador of The Order of Malta to the Royal Court of France, and was held in the highest of esteem.[65] His tactical naval interventions included using the 'cutting of the line', a tactic that was so brilliantly exploited by Admiral Horatio Nelson in the Battle of the Nile. This crucial naval encounter took place in Aboukir Bay, off the Egyptian coast at Abu Qir, soon after the Napoleonic invasion of Malta. Some of the coinage and valuable items plundered by Napoleon from Malta are being excavated by French archaeologists (from 1995) from the seabed of Aboukir Bay itself.

[65] In this posting he did not live at the Grand Priory of the Order, in the Temple precinct, but rather at the *Hôtel* de Montmorency.

Suffren's younger brother by one year, Paul-Julien Suffren de St Tropez, was born in 1729 and was probably educated at the Jesuit school at the naval port of Toulon. He entered the Order on the same day as his elder brother on 27 September 1737. Both arrived on Malta for the first time in 1748. After distinguished service on the galleys of the Order, Paul-Julien was promoted to a *Commendatore* (Commander) in 1772, and later to the rank of a Grand Cross and *Bailli* (Bailiff) of the Order.

At the time of the French invasion in 1798, the then *Bailli* Paul-Julien commanded the Order's vessel, the two deck *San Zaccaria*.[66] Hemmed into the Grand Harbour by the Napoleonic fleet, Paul-Julien took command of the fortifications of the city of Senglea during the short siege that followed, as well as of the overall shore defences there. He was a member of the Council of the Order that met to decide countermeasures to the French invasion. On 18 June 1798 he accompanied Grand Master von Hompesch into exile in Trieste.

It is obvious that Paul-Julien Suffren was Isouard's patron. His name, as *Ill[ustre] D[omi]nus Comm[endatore] Fr[à] Julianus Suffrè[n],* is recorded on the birth certificate of the twelfth Isouard sibling, Juliana Fortunata, born on 6 October 1792. Obviously Juliana had been named after Frà Paul-Julien, or *Julianus* in the Latin. As a family friend and patron, the younger Suffren was instrumental in obtaining Isouard's education at the Tournon College. Official French patronage of his education was first requested by the Grand Master Emmanuel de Rohan of the Prince de Souboise, and then by the *Bailli* Pierre André de Suffren, who was by then, the Order's Ambassador in Paris. [67]

Both elder and younger Suffren brothers were strategically important in facilitating the education of the young Isouard, and the composer's gratitude is expressed in the dedication of this *Te Deum* in 1791. Possibly the genesis of the work and its dedication to Frà Paul-Julien may have coincided with some important event in his career. Unfortunately I have not been able to find any specific reason for such a celebration.

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[66] Carmel Testa, *The French in Malta* (Valletta: Midsea Books, 1997), 32, 36-8.
[67] Rohan to Suffren (Paris) 31 July 1786. Archives Nat. France.

Most Maltese composers of the period wrote settings of the *Te Deum*. Girolamo Abos composed one for choir and four-part strings with organ continuo.[68] Emanuele Nani (1768-1860) composed a setting in 1849 in D major,[69] and Benigno Zerafa composed a *Te Deum* in 1746 for four-part choir, strings, organ continuo and two trumpets.[70] Francesco Azopardi wrote three settings in the years 1775, 1776 and 1798, the year of the French invasion.[71]

The *Te Deum* is Isouard's first known large scale work and in some respects a most innovative one. The manuscript is of seventy-two pages. The cover page, albeit rather damaged is inscribed '*Te Deum à Cinque Nicolo Isu[ard]...'* Isouard sets the entire Latin text of the *Te Deum* to music. The second page contains the text *Orig[inale] Dedicato à S[ua]. Ec[celenza]. Il Comendator Suffren de St Tropez 1791 Dal Nicolo Isouard.* This dedication would have to have been given to the younger brother, as the elder Suffren had mercifully died in Paris in 1788 - one year before the upheaval of the French Revolution.[72]

On the first page of music, (page three of the manuscript), the orchestration is listed in descending order as: Corni I and II in Re, Clarinetti I and II in Do, Flauti I and II, Oboe I and II, Violini I and II, Canto I (soprano), Canto II (soprano), Alto, Tenor, Basso and the lowest line of bassi, which also contains the tempo marking of *Allegro Vivace*. The paper is in landscape format and has the usual twelve ruled staves. There are no spare staves on the page.

The damage to the score exists down the right hand edges of the paper, but becoming more damaged into the music text, the lower down the page itself. Fortunately, this damage decreases the further one progresses into the score, so that by page sixty-seven, no real damage to the musical notation is evident. Accordingly, every page of the manuscript before page sixty-seven has involved the loss of some of the musical material, necessitating a partial reconstruction of the score. In this reconstruction, one has been fortunate in having musical and textual leads as to the nature of the missing material, and I suggest that these

[68] Girolamo Abos, *Te Deum laudamus* in D minor. Biblioteca Filippini, Naples, Italy, I-Nf.
[69] Emanuele Nani, *Te Deum* for choir and orchestra in D major. Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta. Music Ms 1849.
[70] Benigno Zerafa, *Te Deum laudamus*. Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta. Music Ms 269.
[71] Francesco Azopardi, *Te Deum*. Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta. Music Ms 556, 557 and 558.
[72] Suffren died on 8 December 1788 and was buried in the Church of St Mary, the Chapel of the Order of Malta in the Temple precinct. At the height of the Revolution, his bones were torn from his tomb and scattered by the mob.

additions are reliable replacements of the missing parts. The reconstructed sections are placed in brackets and clearly marked in the edition.

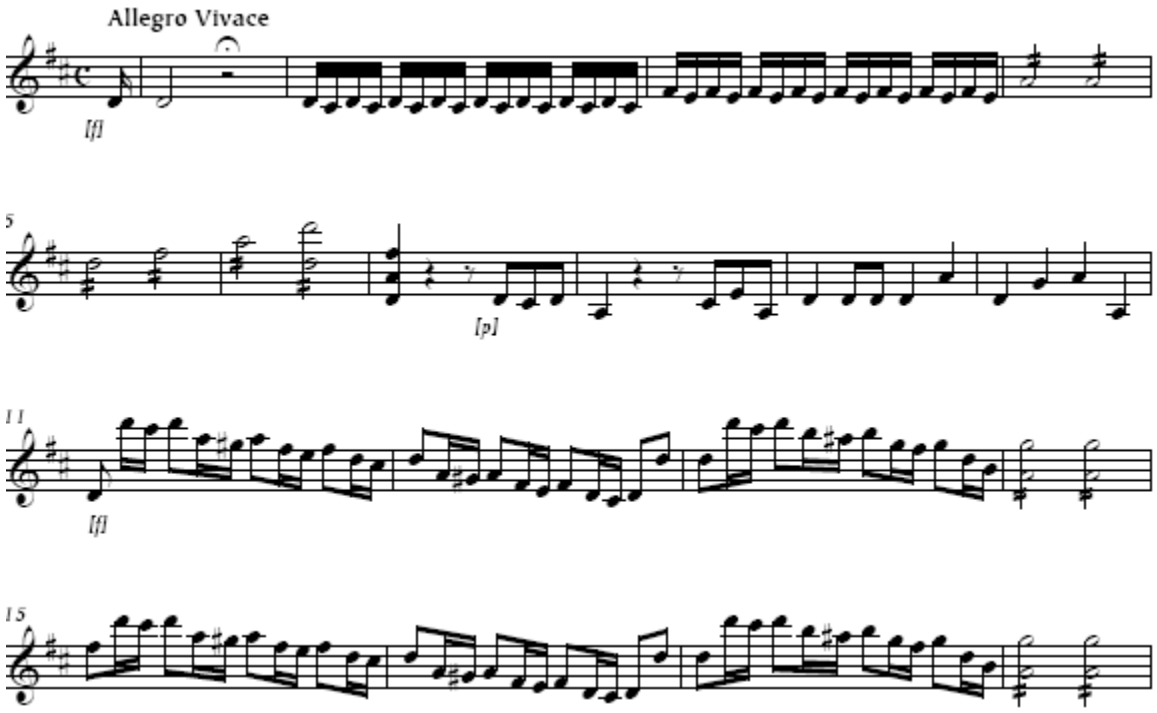
The score, including two separate soprano lines requires five solo singers (SSATB), and a five-part choir (also SSATB). Coincidentally this number of soloists was the usual roster of solo voices in some Roman, and much Neapolitan sacred music of the period - a practice that Isouard would have been familiar with during his studies in Naples with Guglielmi and Nicola Sala. But of special interest is the *Dixit Dominus à 5,* composed by his compatriot Girolamo Abos in 1758, presumably in Naples.[73] Here Abos utilises the vocal roster of five soloists, with two sopranos, as well as a five-part chorus. This work is a major essay by Abos and has been edited by Richard Divall

The opening of the *Te Deum* is amongst Isouard's most confronting and innovative musical ideas. It is music, similar in style to that of the French Revolutionary period - akin to some of the dramatic passages found in the early republican music of Luigi Cherubini or Étienne-Nicholas Méhul. How Isouard, at such a young age, conceived these arresting musical statements seen throughout the *Te Deum* is interesting.

Commentary

After formal opening chords, two aggressive *crescendo* passages of rapid violin semiquavers develop toward the opening choral entry.

[73] F-Pn Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Department Musique, MS-1967.



The festive choral entry of *Te Deum Laudamus* (bar 34) is accompanied alternatively by pairs of horns and oboes, followed by flutes and clarinets, gradually joined by the entire orchestra. The following *Te aeternum* has the first violins playing a *furioso* semiquaver passage with repeated double stoppings in the second violins. In bar 95 a modulation into C major occurs on the words *Tibi omnes,* sung by the first solo soprano entry, accompanied by an obbligato solo clarinet and horn. The dominant key returns with a similar crescendo pattern and a repetition of the passage first heard in bar 32, but to the words *Sanctus, Sanctus*.

The setting of *Te gloriosus* sees a complete change of mood (bar 192), where pairs of clarinets and flutes in thirds accompany the text, sung by the tenor soloist. The chorus is reintroduced to the words *Te per orbem terrarum*, again with a string crescendo of semiquavers on repeated words *Patrem, Patrem*, which leads to an appropriate explosion of sound at the words *Patrem immensae majestatis.* The verse *Venerandum tuum verum,* is written in 2/4 in G major as a solo for the tenor. Here there is an accompanying obbligato from the solo clarinet, which is later joined by a solo violoncello, which echoes the clarinet phrases. There is no tempo direction for this solo of thirty-one bars.

The *Tu ad liberandum* is written in F major as a solo aria for the bass. Here Isouard reintroduces the entire orchestra with the strings and organ – again utilising his trademark device in solo bass arias of passages of unison string quavers. This is accompanied by sturdy crochet phrases from all of the other instruments. The following *Tu devicto mortis* is convincingly written and features grinding and aggressive quaver semitones. In bar 340 the key returns to D major on the words *Tu ad dextram Dei sedes*, and to the same *dolce* passage that occurred previously in bar 192, this time sung by the solo alto. Isouard uses the abbreviated *dextram* instead of the more familiar *dexteram*.

At the fervent prayer of supplication *Te ergo quaesumus,* the time signature changes into 3/4, and all five voices unite in this appeal for assistance and salvation. The key signature itself does not change, but the work moves into D minor. There is no indication in the manuscript if this passage is for the five solo voices, or for the choir itself, but the style of writing would suggest both a continuation of the solo singing, and an editorial tempo direction of *Andante*.

Suddenly the work returns to the key of D major and the *allegro vivace* of the first movement, but with new material on the *Aeterna fac cum sanctis tuis,* first sung as a triumphal solo by the second solo soprano, and then joined in repeated solos by the first soprano and finally by the solo tenor. The work concludes with a recapitulation of the opening material of the work where the choir sings the *Per singulos dies*. The joyful finale is interrupted by the *Miserere Domine,* where the choral tenors and unison clarinets gently intone a pleading semitone motif in D minor - the major key joyfully returning with the full choir and orchestra on the text *Fiat misericordiam.* The entire text of the *Te Deum* is set by the composer and the work is around eighteen minutes in duration and 532 bars in length.

Besides being Isouard's first musical essay on a major scale, the work is notable for the integration and multiple uses of some of its thematic material. It is a remarkable and innovative composition for an eighteen year old musician who had spent much of his life on Malta, but who had obviously assimilated the musical influences of his studies in France in the mid 1780's.

33. Vexilla Regis Prodeunt.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Hymn in the Liturgy of Holy Week.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in D, violin I and II, bassi and organ continuo, with soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 239-246.

This great Hymn of the Church forms part of the sacred liturgy of Holy Week, and is sung during the procession when the Blessed Sacrament is brought to the Altar of Repose.

The fragments of the Latin text composed as a *pezzo staccato* set by Isouard read:

Vexilla regis prodeunt,
fulget crucis mysterium,
Qua vita mortem pertulit
et morte vitam reddidit.
Arbor decora et fulgida,
ornata regis purpura,
electa, digno stipite
tam sancta membra tangere!

The hymn was written in the sixth century by Venantius Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers, and seemingly first sung in Poitiers Cathedral in 569 AD, when a relic of the True Cross, found in Jerusalem by St Helena, was sent to France by the Byzantine Emperor Justin II (AD 565-578). The main fragment of the St Helena's piece of the True Cross was given to the Order of Malta in 1484 by the Ottoman Sultân, Bayezid II, whilst the Knights were still on Rhodes.[74]

[74] Sultân Bayezid II (Bāyezīd-i-sānī) succeeded Sultân Mehmed II in 1481 and abdicated in 1512.

With the Icon of Philerme, and the relic of the right hand of St John the Baptist, it been brought to Malta by the Knights in 1530. In Isouard's time it was actually held and venerated in the Conventual Church in Valletta, before being taken off Malta by Grand Master von Hompesch. It is now held in the Monastery of San Petru (St Peter's), in Cetinje, Montenegro.[75]

The Hymn has been set by early composers such as Guillaume Dufay and Orlando de Lasso. The Australian composer, Fritz Hart (1874-1949), wrote an *a capella* setting of a Mass by that name in 1912 for the Anglican Cathedral in Perth. Isouard's teacher, Francesco Azopardi wrote a version of the work in 1792, which the young Isouard surely would have known. In the Cathedral Museum at Mdina there is also a setting by the Perugian born composer Agostino Diruta, who was based at St Augustine's in Rome from 1630-1647.[76]

There is no title page, and the pages are unnumbered. But the inscription on the first page of the music reads: *Vexilla Nicolo Isouard* and the instrumental forces are listed in the score in this descending order as: Violini I and II, Oboe I and II, Corni I and II in Re, with untitled voice clefs for soprano, alto, tenor and bass, and finally Bassi with organ continuo. There is only one figured bass indication and that occurs in bar 21.

Commentary

The work begins with a short orchestral introduction of seventeen bars before the four voices enter, followed by a restatement of a few bars based on the opening material. There is a *Dal Segno* mark at the beginning of bar 25, at the text *qua vita mortem pertulit*. In the middle section, after the *Fine* marking in bar 73, Isouard suddenly lunges from D major into the key of B flat at the words *electa digno stipite*.

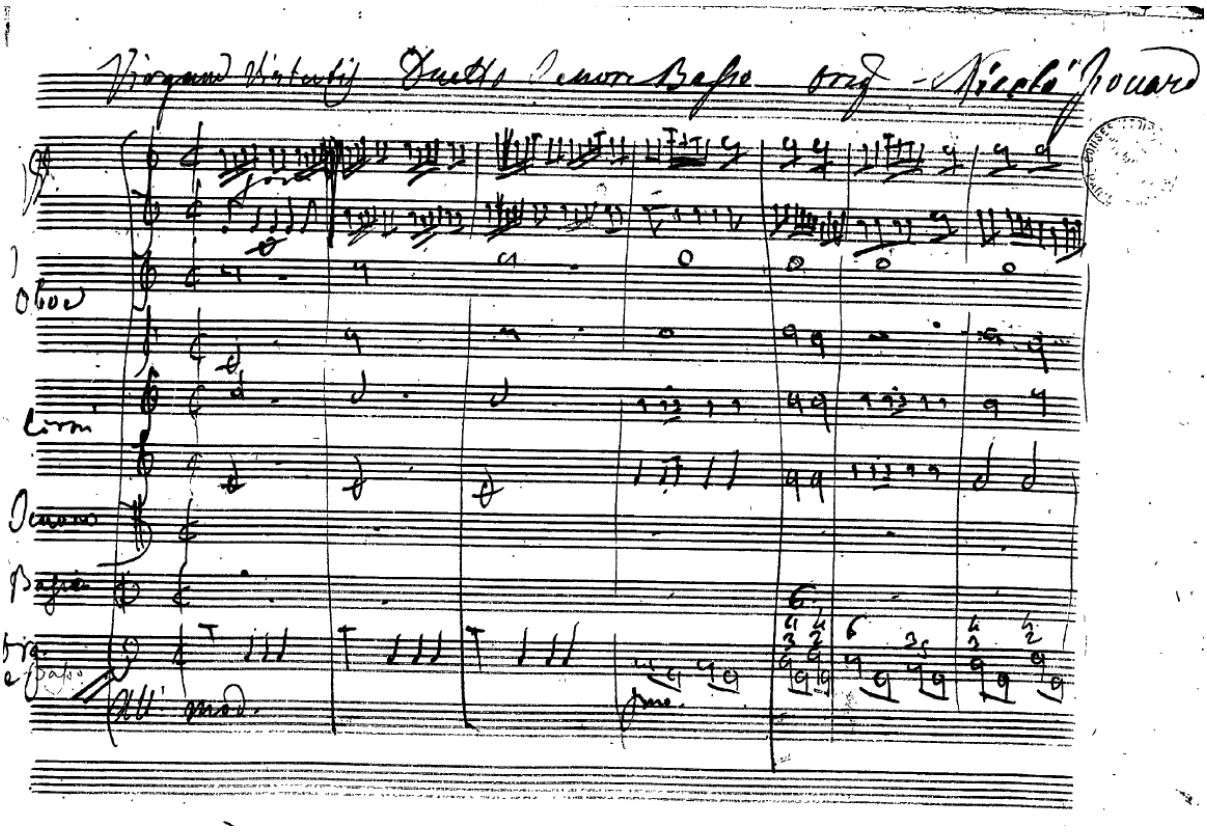
[75] In World War Two the two relics and the Icon of Philerme disappeared from the Royal Chapel in Belgrade at the time of the German invasion of Jugoslavia. In 1997 the author located and verified the survival of the Icon of Philerme, and the relics of Saint Helena's Piece of the True Cross and the Right Hand of St John the Baptist, in Cetinje in 1997. The Icon is held in the National Museum at Cetinje, whilst the two relics are within the Orthodox Monastery of St Peter in the same town. Prior to 1918, Cetinje had been the capital of the Kingdom of Montenegro.

[76] Agostino Diruta, *Vexilla Regis*. In *Compieta concertata* (Venice 1623).Born in Perugia, c. 1595, Diruta was an Augustinian friar/priest who was based first in Venice, Asolo and from 1630 onwards at S. Agostino in Rome.

The setting of the text is unusual - in that Isouard starts the work with the first two lines of verse one of the hymn, and then jumps to the final two lines of the hymn itself, beginning with *qua vita mortem pertulit*. In the short middle section after the *Fine,* in bar 74 to 93, he uses line five complete - the opening words of which are *Arbor decora et fulgida*. Isouard utilises some unusual spellings and these, together with the rearrangements of the text, are listed in the notes.

Parts of the text of the hymn used by the composer, were those authorised to be omitted by Pope Urban VIII (Barberini, 1568-1644), however some of the amended text is included in the Isouard textual setting; e.g. *reddidit* replaced by *protulit*.

34. Virgam Virtutis Tuae – Duet for solo tenor and bass.



Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Extract from Psalm 109 (110) - *Dixit Dominus*, which is the first Vespers Psalm on Sundays and Feast Days.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in C, strings and organ continuo without violas, with solo tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113A, pp. 18-26.

The *Virgam Virtutis* is a *pezzo staccato* taken from the Psalm *Dixit Dominus*, the first psalm of Vespers for Sunday. The text, which is verse two of the Psalm, as set by Isouard reads:

Virgam virtutis tuae emittet Dominus ex Sion
Dominare in medio inimicorum tuorum.

Or in English:

The Lord will send forth the sceptre of thy power out of Sion:
Rule thou in the midst of thy enemies.

This is a fine bravura duet for two male voices, written very much in the French style of the late 1780's, rather than in the more conservative type of sacred music composed during that decade on Malta. It calls for larger male voices, and also a tenor who can ascend a scale to a top C. The work is inscribed on the first page of the music as: *Virgam Virtutis Duetto Tenore Basso orig[inale] – Nicolo Isouard*. The forces called for in the score are listed in descending order as: Violini I and II, Oboe I and II, Corni I and II in Do, Tenore, Basso and Organo e Basso. Written on the twelve stave paper, the manuscript is seventeen pages in length. The duet text is verse two of Psalm 109 (110), which is the *Dixit Dominus* psalm. Benigno Zerafa had composed no less than ten settings of this psalm between 1743 and 1773, whilst Francesco Azopardi had made no less than sixteen settings of the *Dixit* and the *Dixit Dominus* over a period from 1772 to 1805.[77] No setting of the *Virgam Virtutis*, as a separate entity is listed in any of the Maltese music catalogues.

The duet in C major is in one movement, with a tempo indication of *Allegro moderato*, and is well written for the tessitura of the voices. The oboes are written independently of the strings and are often marked *soli* with the pair of horns.

Commentary

After an orchestral introduction of thirteen bars, each voice is allocated a solo statement, set to the opening sentence of the first verse, followed by a passage of canonic weaving of the two voices together. This precedent is continued in the second half of the work, with a typical series of phrases with a rising moving bass underneath a series of upper pedals in the two voices.[78] This leads to the fine dramatic vocal climax of the work, which ends with a short orchestral finale. In bars 103 and 105 there is a clashing between the solo tenor and

[77] The manuscripts of these works by Zerafa and Azopardi are held in the Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta
[78] The same compositional device as is used in the finales of Isouard's bass arias.

the first violin lines. Although the composer's intentions are very clear in the manuscript, the performer may decide to make either the voice or the violins unison with the other line.

35. Virgam Virtutis Tuae for solo tenor.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Verse two of Psalm 109 (110) - *Dixit Dominus*.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in C, strings and organ continuo and solo tenor voice, but without violas.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 80-89.

This work is set as a *pezzo staccato* to the same text as the immediate above work. Like the *Diffusa est Gratia* for soprano castrato, this work for solo tenor is a vocal *tour de force* and and one of two important sacred works written by Isouard purely for the solo voice. Two hundred and ninety-nine bars in length, it is written on eighteen pages of manuscript, ruled with twelve staves - six lines being allocated to a line of the work. The pairs of horns and oboes each share a stave.

The work is entitled: *Virgam Virtutis Solo Tenore con Oboe Soli e Corni. Nicolo Isouard.* The performing forces required in the work are listed on the manuscript as: Violini I and II, Oboes I and II, Corni I and II in C, Tenore and Bassi*,* with the organ continuo and figured bass*.* It is not entirely possible to determine which singer might have performed this large scale sacred scena. But there are two probable names.

In the decade of the 1790's there were three tenors on the roster at the Mdina Cathedral of St Paul, two of whom were two Maltese 'singing' priests - Don Paolo Micaleff and Don Diego Xicluna (Scicluna). Both had been at the cathedral for some time. Then in 1779 a *fine tenor* called Gaetano Schiattone arrived on Malta. He must have been a valuable and musical

singer, as his salary of 278 *scudi* in 1785 was superior to that enjoyed by the castrati Pasquale Arcaro and Michele Marino.[79]

There is one other possibility as to the identity of the singer that this work was composed for.[80] On 5 July 1798, Isouard and twenty other musicians and singers of the Conventual Church of St John, petitioned the French Commissioner, appealing that their arrears in salary for the month of June be addressed.[81] Among the names are two tenors, Matteo Golfarelli, and the Maltese singer, Salvatore Portelli. The former was obviously more valued, as his salary for the month was listed as eight *scudi*, as against five *scudi* for Portelli.[82] Both Golfarelli and the castrato, Gennaro Oliva must have been considered essential to the Liturgy of St John's, as the only record that we have of payment given to this petition is for these two soloists.[83] I would suggest that Isouard composed the aria with Golfarelli as the intended soloist.

The text of the *Virgam Virtutis* is taken from Verse two of Psalm 109 (110), *Dixit Dominus*, a psalm that had been set to music by many composers including Handel and Vivaldi as well as by Isouard himself. Although Isouard's teacher Francesco Azopardi and Benigno Zerafa, the *maestro di capella* of the Mdina Cathedral, had made many settings of the complete psalm, neither had composed a work utilising only this verse.

The work calls for a strong tenor voice, with no coloratura, but one with a larger lyric line, and one that had the ability to sustain a long period of singing and a range extending to a top C. The orchestration is forward looking, and again the oboes and pair of horns are written quite independently of the strings and continuo. Performed live in St John's or at Mdina, the work would have been a major musical event, as it runs for seventeen minutes in length.

[79] Bruni, *Musica e Musicisti*, 71.
[80] Vella Bondin, in *Azzopardi,* 25.
[81] NLM, Arch. 6524C, Petition No. 49.
[82] NLM, Arch. 968, 108, and Arch. 1001, 20-30.
[83] NLM, Arch. 6523C, pp.112, 113, 117, 118.

Commentary

There is an opening orchestral introduction of twenty-six bars in a broad *alla breve,* before the voice enters with the opening lines of the psalm verse. It is expansive and lyrical tenor writing. Different from that of the works of Azopardi, it is composition reminiscent of the bigger Neapolitan operatic school of the time, that looked forward to the vocal works of Niccolò Zingarelli and also the French school of the following decade.

Characteristic of the following vocal material, is writing that includes jumps of over an octave that occurs in several places in the score. In bar 76, Isouard introduces one of his typical infectious melodies in the first violins that will accompany the voice. A melody of great simplicity, it is of a similar style used by Isouard to greater effect in his *opéra-comiques* composed in France. Toward the end of the first section the composer uses a series of *arpeggios* in the voice, ascending to a top B, before an orchestral postlude.

Modulating into G minor and returning to B flat major, the second section commences more introspectively than in the triumphal opening section, before the voice plunges into a dramatic passage to the text *Dominare in medio*. With a return to C major the opening statement returns in bar 203 and an additional repetition of that earlier material. The tenor line builds over two rising phrases that culminate in a magisterial scale to a top C in the voice, and the work ends with an effective orchestral finale.

36. Virtute Magna.

Place and date of composition

Unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Motet on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The first verse appears as a chant in Medieaval manuscripts on Easter Tuesday and Easter Friday.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Oboe I and II, horns I and II in E flat, violin I and II, (no violas) with bassi and organ continuo, and soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices.

The source

F-Pn, Ms 8113B, pp. 37-56.

This is a motet for Easter tide - the text being taken from the Acts of the Apostles (4:33). The Liturgy only uses nine of the words of the verse and adds an *Alleluia* at the end. The complete text set by the composer reads:

Virtute magna reddebant apostoli testimonium resurrectionis Jesu Christi Domini. Alleluia.

Or in English:

With great power, the Apostles gave their testimony of the resurrection of the Jesus Christ, our Lord. Alleluia.

This short work is in two sections, an opening *Allegro* and then an *Andante con moto* in 6/8, where in the final bar there is a *subito dal segno (al fine),* again to the actual *Fine* of the work. There are no listings of this text in the Mdina Catalogue as having been set by either Francesco Azopardi or Benigno Zerafa. However, Giovanni Croce [1557-1609] and Giovanni Gabrieli set the text, whilst Palestrina composed a Mass entitled *Missa Virtute Magna*.

The work is inscribed on the front page in the music as: *Orig[inale]. Motetti per la Resur[r]ezione a 4 voci con VV [Violini]. Oboe corni e bassi Nicolò Isouard Xuereb.* The

performing forces are listed at the beginning of the score in this descending layout: Corni I and II in E flat, Oboes I and II, Violini I and II, with lines containing soprano, alto, tenor and bass clefs for the voices and a tutti Bassi line, although there are no figure bass indications. The fifteen pages of the manuscript are written on twelve stave paper. There is an additional copyist's part of two pages for the *Contro Basso*.

Commentary

The opening movement of twenty-four bars in common time and in E flat major has no tempo direction, but an *Allegro* would be the obvious choice. It is notable for the independent fanfare-like writing for the woodwinds and horns. This is followed to the text of *Testimonium resurrectionis*, by a 6/8 movement in the tempo of *Andante con moto. This i*ncludes a *subito Dal Segno (al Fine)*, back to bar five of this movement. This *Andante* section is a joyful unfolding of the text and the repetitions of the *Alleluia* are full of dynamic contrasts and dramatic pauses in the score. The work is written with great energy in the delivery of the text in both sections. It is a compact but effective piece, written by a composer who was on the way to becoming a professional in his field of sacred music.

3. Appendix.

37. Messa à Quatro Voci - 1790

Place and date of composition

Date of composition is given as 1790, and place is unknown.

Text and Liturgical function

Full setting of the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria* of the Ordinary of the Mass.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Flute I and II, oboe I and II, horns I and II, trumpets I and II, strings, including violas and organ continuo, with soprano, alto, tenor and bass soloists and chorus.

The source

Malta. Archives of the Cospicua Collegiate Church (Parish of The Immaculate Conception), Bormla. No catalogue number.

This large scale and anonymous work of the period, held in the above Maltese Church Archive is not composed by Nicolò Isouard. But it is too important a work from a Maltese library to omit from this edition and thesis. The style of the writing suggests that of the composer Joseph Schuster, who was especially active in Naples around 1774 to 1781.[84] On the other hand there is a possibility that the work might be by Michel' Angelo Vella (1710-1792), who was *maestro di capella* of this same church at Bormla, and Isouard himself might either have known it, or contributed to it. On the front page of the full score there is the signature of the Maltese composer, Don Giuseppe Burlò (31 January 1772 - 23 November 1850), together with a short abbreviated text about payment for the piece. Burlò's authorship might be ruled out, as he was only eighteen-years-old when the work was

[84] Joseph Schuster (1748-1812) wrote a number of *opera seria* for Naples including his *La Didone abbandonata* (1776), and *Demofoonte* (also 1776). He composed a considerable amount of sacred music including nineteen settings of the Ordinary of the Mass.

written in 1790. Further, on examining and editing other scores by Burlò in the Wignacourt Museum, it is clear that the writing of the Mass bears no relation to his style.

As the structure and the vocal writing of this major work is not stylistically similar to either Francesco Azopardi, or to Benigno Zerafa, that leaves only one Maltese composer who might possibly be considered, and that is Vella. It is possible that the work could be from the pen of this important composer – one who kept musical pace with the changing musical styles of the period. But as Vella would have been 80 years of age in 1790, there is the possibility that such a large scale composition was written in collaboration with a pupil, however, this remains total conjecture. This major score, dating from the period of Isouard's service to the church on Malta, could be regarded as possibly one of the most important music manuscripts of its time to be found on the islands. It is for this express reason that I have included it in this edition of sacred music, and can only hope that the question of the authorship will one day be resolved.[85]

The manuscript of the Mass is 173 pages in length and is written on the familiar twelve stave music paper. The title page of the work has the following inscription: *Messa à Quattro Voci con più Istrumenti anno dm[Domini] 1790.* On the bottom of the same page is the following inscription: *S.21 42 tari c3.6 Tutto il costo è di (an* unidentified symbol*) Burlò P[adrone]e*^{oo} – or owner. I would notate this as an indication of payment for the manuscript, reading *Tutto il costo è di Scudi 21, 42 Tari, Grani 3.6*.[86] The currency employed in the 18th century during the Grand Mastership of de Rohan, by the Order of Malta on Malta consisted of the *Scudo, Tari, Carlino, Cinquina,* and *Grano*.[87]

The orchestral and vocal requirements of the work are listed on the first page of the music itself, and are in the following descending order: Violino Pmõ, Violino Sdõ, Oboè Pmõ, Oboè Sdõ, Corni I and II in S[ol], Trombe I and II in C, Viole, Canto, Alto, Tenore and Basso. Finally

[85] I am deeply grateful to Dr Simon Mercieca of The University of Malta who brought this manuscript to my attention, as well as numerous other works by Maltese composers.

[86] This was a large amount of money for the period, and probably would refer to the cost of commissioning, or for a complete performance, rather than for simply copying the full score. The twenty *scudi* coin on the Order was the largest issued in de Rohan's reign, and in today's value would be worth around $3,000 for the gold content.

[87] Felice Restelli & Joseph Sammut, *The Coinage of the Knights in Malta* (Valletta: Emmanuel Said Publishers, 1977), vol. 1, 188-203.

the *tutti bassi* and organ continuo line is unlisted, having only the tempo direction of *Allegro Spiritoso* attached to this line. Two flutes are not listed in the initial orchestration of the first page of the music, but are later introduced in the third movement of the *Gloria*, the *Domine Deus*. The work consists of a musical setting of the complete Latin text to the *Kyrie* and the *Gloria* - the *Gloria* being in seven separate movements.

Commentary

The *Kyrie* comes in its three distinct sections and is 300 bars long. The opening orchestral introduction alone runs for forty-six bars, and at the entry of the tutti chorus, this opening statement is repeated for a further nineteen bars by both the orchestra and the chorus. On the manuscript the *Kyrie* is consistently spelt in the Greek fashion as *Chirie* - a practice that appears in other Maltese compositions of the period by Azopardi. In the edition I have retained the traditional Latin spelling of the word.

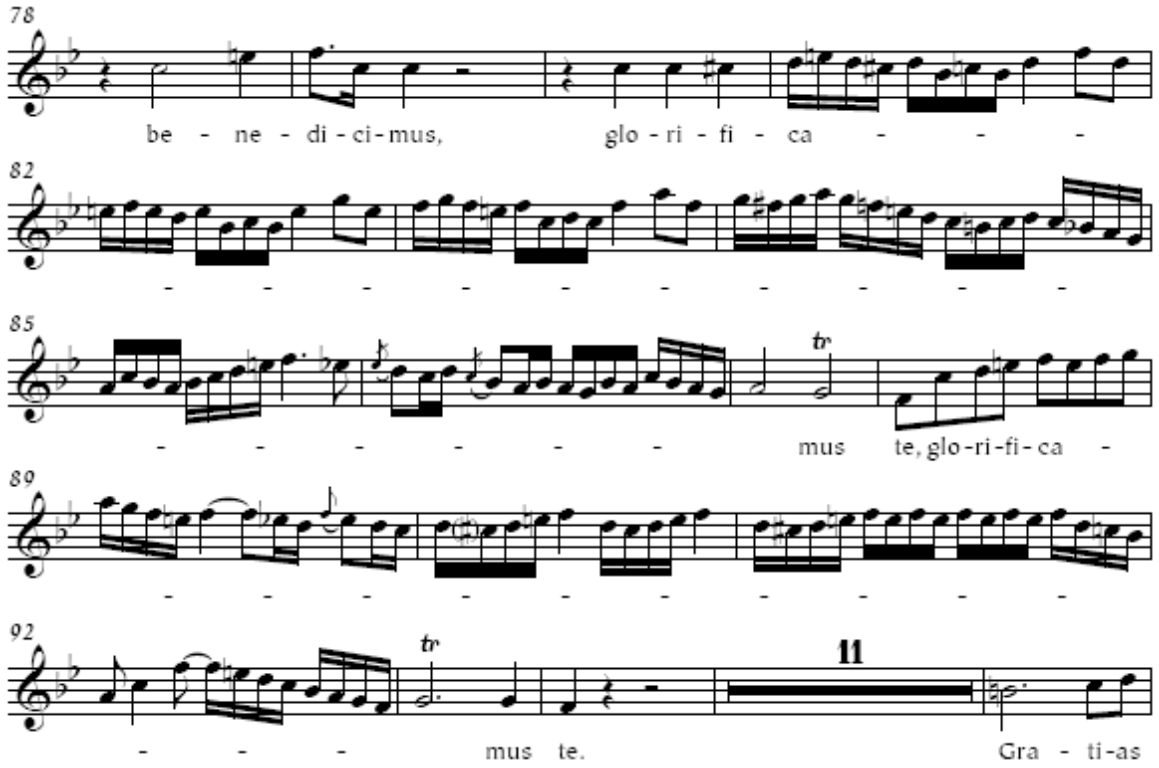
A departure from the musical and thematic structure of the introduction occurs in bar 72, where a quasi-fugal passage commences with four separate choral entries based on this short fugal theme. After a short bridge passage in the unison strings, the score modulates into E flat major and the first entry of the soprano soloist is heard in the *Christe eleison.* The hushed chorus re-enter as if in answer to that opening solo. The *Christe eleison* is accompanied only by the strings section.

In a sudden return to the key of C major, the second *Kyrie* begins *forte* with a repetition of the material of the first *Kyrie* - again utilising the full performing forces. The direction of the repetition of this opening material changes when the composer starts to refashion the thematic elements through a transitional passage. This leads to the key of G major and the movement, using the same basic materials proceeds to a triumphant finale. The work ends with the instruction *Siegue Gloria*; the *Siegue* being a traditional Maltese and Neapolitan spelling of the Italian word *segue* found in music manuscripts of this period.

The *Gloria* is a triumphal *stretto* piece in D major, but curiously without the two trumpets. The celebratory tone of the score utilises contrasts in *piano* passages on such predictable words as the *Et in terra pax*. After a fermata and a change of key into D minor, the entire

mood of the work changes with a hushed choral passage, accompanied by the strings to the *Et in terra pax*. This section of the work is expansive and in a feeling of *alla breve*, but always completely reverential. The key returns to D major and the celebratory mood of the opening of the *Gloria*. The composer again uses the opening text of the *Gloria* by employing another quasi canonic series of entries for the four parts of the choir. Used as a *crescendo,* this builds toward the end of the movement on the words *in excelsis Deo, gloria*.

The two texts of the *Laudamus Te* and *Gratias agimus tibi* are in fact one movement, but linked together into one grand aria for soprano solo. It is an extensive work, one hundred and seventy-seven bars in length, which utilises long lyrical phrases interspersed with imaginative and well written, but difficult coloratura passages. An oboe obbligato is introduced in bar 18 which appears consistently throughout this movement. The opening orchestral introduction is no less than twenty-nine bars long, and it acts as an exposition of the same materials that are later taken up by the soprano soloist. The coloratura passages that begin in bar 59 and also in bar 80, to the most appropriate text *glorificamus te* are extremely well composed for the voice. However, these passages would have needed a well-trained eighteenth century vocal technique to sing it.



A bridge passage modulates into G major and C minor, which leads directly to the second half of the aria, which introduces the text of the *gratias agimus tibi*. In this second half of the aria, the coloratura passages are joyfully employed on the textual phrase *propter magnam gloriam tuam*. This grand display piece of accomplished vocal writing concludes on a *cadenza fermata* for the soprano followed by the orchestral postlude which is on a similar expansive scale. Interestingly in bars 132 to 135, the composer uses the musical sign for vibrato/espressivo that was employed by the composer Gluck, both in his middle and later operas and in his two *ballet d'action*, *Alessandro* and *Semiramide*. This vibrato or bowing symbol also appears in the early operatic works of Johann Adolf Hasse, in his *Marc'Antonio e Cleopatra*, composed for Naples in 1725, and also in the Mass in G by the Maltese Girolamo Abos.[88] Isouard retains this *espressivo* sign extensively in the first movement of his orchestration of the Jommelli Requiem.

The *Domine Deus* is set as an aria for either second soprano or an alto voice, but with a higher tessitura than usual. This vocal line is notated as *canto* and written in the soprano clef. In this aria, a pair of flutes is introduced for the first time in the work. The elegant flute passages, either as a solo or with the two flutes together is complementary to the vocal line, and throughout this part of the aria, both flutes and solo soprano augment and complement each other's phrasing. This aria is in two parts - the first an elegant 2/4 *Andante sostenuto* in G major, which leads after a series of pauses into an *Allegro* in 4/4. The first section of the aria is elegantly written for the voice and the accompanying flutes, with gentle vocal phrasing. The *Allegro* section requires a different style of vocal approach from that of the previous aria, and the coloratura is restricted to a phrase in triplets, with a final flourish in three bars of semiquavers. The flute obbligato is a solo in the *Allegro*, with the second flute generally being utilised only in the orchestral tuttis.

The *Qui Tollis* is scored in the moving key of C minor, and is one of the finest movements in the entire Mass. It takes the form of an elegiac and reflective soprano solo. This is followed by phrases from either the four soloists singing as an ensemble, or from the four-part chorus. It is impossible to tell, due to a lack of indications on the manuscript, if a group of

[88] Girolamo Abos, *Missa à quatro voci* in G. Bibl Nat. Paris F-Pn. ed. Richard Divall.

soloists or the choir are to be singing. It is a movement of profound sadness, but at the same time of achingly great beauty. The sombre mood is totally changed to one of joyful supplication in the *suscipe deprecationem nostram*, when the time signature changes to an *Allegro* 3 /8 in C major. This change of mood is radical, and in following the previous sombre movement, seems a little false or even possibly banal.

The following *Qui sedes* is also written as an aria for soprano solo, which places a heavy responsibility on the singer of the *Canto* part in this work. It might be that the second soprano takes over the part of this role in the performance. In a 3/4 time signature in F major, and in the tempo of *Andante sostenuto*, this movement is a beautifully constructed aria and has a simplicity, and a limpidity in its vocal writing. The vocal phrasing is aimed in amplifying the depth of the meaning of the text, though without any profound musical imagery. The weaving vocal line evocatively creates a sense of tranquillity.

The melismatic vocal line is occasionally interwoven with a solo oboe obbligato that is reflective and in sympathy with the floating phrases of the voice. The tessitura of this aria lies rather high, with many of the phrases flowing around the G above the stave and punctuated by a series of vocal pauses. In bar 60, the text on the vocal line has not been added to the manuscript, and I have editorially added what I suspect is the correct text - in this case the word *Miserere*. The singer concludes with yet another cadenza point for the voice, and again, one intended to amplify the word *Miserere*.

The *Quoniam tu solus* that follows the soprano aria is a *bravura*, almost operatic vocal scena, composed as a *tour de force* for the solo bass voice. It is 177 bars in length, and composed in the heroic style, in the key of B flat major. Trumpets are reintroduced into the orchestration, and the orchestral introduction runs for no less than thirty-six bars. The vocal line is sturdy but on the word *Jesu* the bass sings long passages of quaver coloratura. Despite the obvious solemnity of the word set to this coloratura display, in no way could this aria be described as religious in feeling. A similar long passage of coloratura ensues to a dotted figure, before the music plunges into D minor and a repetition of the text. At a vocal cadenza pause on the words *Jesu Christe,* the aria returns to the dominant key and to a repetition of the opening text and musical statement. Another two long coloratura passages

follow and a final cadenza point for the soloist, before the aria comes to its operatic conclusion.

The opening choral and orchestral introduction of the final movement of the Mass, the *Cum Sancto Spiritu,* is one of the finest pieces in the work. A gently lilting crescendo of *Andante* triplets builds in dynamic intensity, until it subsides into a hushed repetition of the *Amen*. I realise that the violin and violas pizzicato in bars 17 to 19, notated on slurred triplets may look unusual, but it is a creative and original musical thought. After a pause, it is followed by a grand fugal *Amen* that utilises all of the orchestral forces, but excludes the two flutes. *Alla breve* in feeling, this Allegro in 8/4 is a tremendous piece of composition. It starts with a quasi fugal series of vocal and orchestral phrases, before coalescing into a unified finale ensemble.

At this moment the organ figured bass becomes heavily notated for the first time, as the chromatic and contrapuntal interplay between all of the parts is both dense and often changing. It takes the form of a double fugue, so often utilised by Jan Dismas Zelenka and the Dresden school. It is worth commenting that such double fugues were extremely common in Neapolitan *portimenti* or *solfeggi fugati.*[89] I have to point out that Michel'Angelo Vella was a master of writing these double subject fugues, something he constantly did in most of the finale movements of his Twenty-Four Sonatas for Three solo *Traversiero* Flutes**.**[90]

In bar 48 the work reverts to *alla breve* 4/4 time and propels itself towards the conclusion of the movement. The composer moves to his previous musical practice of making a canonic series of vocal entries, a passage that is again repeated, but using a different order in the four vocal parts. After a final *Stretto* tempo direction the work leads to a triumphant conclusion.

[89] I am grateful in having this detail brought ot my attention by Dr Nicholas Baragwaneth of The University of Nottingham.
[90] Michel' Angelo Vella, *24 Sonatas for Three Traversiero Flutes*. ed. Richard Divall (Melbourne: Lyrebird Press, 2009-2013), Vols 1-4.

38. Sinfonia in C minor.

Place and date of composition

The work was most probably composed on Malta round 1794.

Text and Liturgical function

Orchestral sinfonia only, possibly a *sinfonia della chiesa* or an overture to one of Isouard's operas presented on Malta at the time.

Instrumental/vocal forces

Flute I, oboe I and II, bassoon, horns I and II in C, strings and organ continuo.

The source

Malta, Franciscan Friary, Valletta, Archives of the Commissariat of The Holy Land, Music Ms 1.

I have included this work in the edition, for whilst there is no definitive proof that the work was intended for church performance, there are several facts that might make that proposal a possibility. The work, which survives in a set of incomplete orchestral parts, but without a full score, is the only work by Isouard, to be found in an ecclesiastical library on Malta. There it is held amongst a collection of possibly sacred instrumental and other sacred works by his teacher Francesco Azopardi (1748-1808). These include the latter's *Messa da Requiem*, a *Veni Sponsa Christi* and a *Dixit breve*, as well as two *Sinfonie* by that composer. It is more than likely that the Azopardi *Sinfonie* were utilised in church performance, as the composer wrote almost no secular music. This was a common practise on Malta in the late eighteenth-century.

One other point is that the work is composed for the forces generally available on the musician's roster of the Conventual Church. But the orchestration listed suggests that it contains two viola parts. Interestingly these are inscribed on the front cover of the Bassi part (numbered H1) but are amongst the missing parts from the orchestral set. Is this a slip of the copyists pen when he lists the words *due Viole*? It was a normal procedure in the

works of the composer Josef Schuster, who worked regularly at this time in Naples to use the term *due viole*, whilst often having only a single viola line in the music itself. Similarly, in Mozart's *opera seria Lucio Silla*, Mozart often uses the term Viole I-II, even though there is only one line utilised for the violas themselves. Or were there no viola parts at all? This was a traditional performance practice of the period, where the middle lines in performance of orchestral church music were 'filled in' by the organ continuo. Although two bassi parts survive (numbered H1 and H2), there are no figured bass indications on either part, meaning either that none exist, or that such figures were contained on the missing full orchestral score, or even on a missing organ continuo part.

The full orchestration is listed on the cover of the first bassi part H1, which reads *Sinfonia. Con due Violini, due Viole, Flauto solo, due Oboé, due Corni, è Basso. Del Sig[nor]. Nicolò Isouard.* Most of the orchestral parts of the Sinfonia survive in the collection, but the second oboe and the two cited viola parts are missing. In this edition, the second oboe part and a bassoon part has been reconstructed from the musical activity of the first oboe, and the two horns. A viola line has been added to the score, marked 'ad libitum' - indeed the work could be performed without this added viola part. The surviving orchestral parts in manuscript are two copies of Violin I, one copy each of Violin II, Oboe I, and Horns I and II. There are two copies of both the solo Flauto part and the Bassi.

Commentary

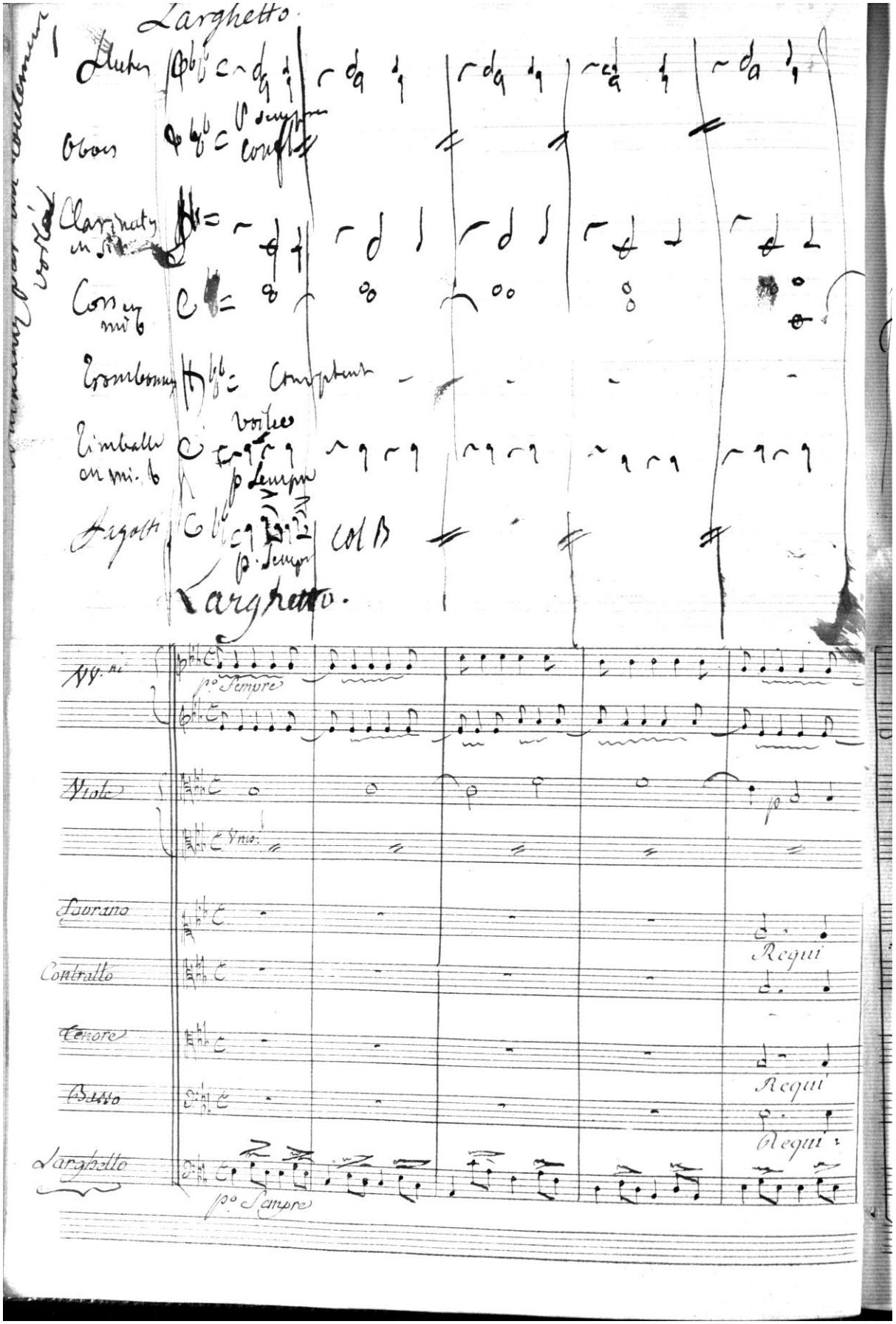
The work begins with an *Andante mosso* in C minor of only eight bars length, and after that the remainder of the work is marked *Allegro assai* to the end of the sinfonia (bar 159). The opening *Andante mosso* is rather akin to the austere neo-classical Gluckian writing of the overture to Pietro Paulo Bugeja's Overture *Gioas, re di Giuda,* composed just a few years later in Malta. In the *Allegro vivo,* the writing for the solo flute and the surviving oboe part are quite liberated from the violins passages. There are also several *unisoni* passages for the solo flute and bass line - a musical device that occurs in other sacred works by Isouard, as well as in some of his opera overtures composed in Paris. In this section there is also an example of self-borrowing that occurs in this Sinfonia, where the composer uses a short passage that is almost identical to a similar *unisoni* section in the overture to his opera of 1794, *L'avviso ai maritati* (bars 75-79). This orchestration technique of unison writing, but

separated by two or three octaves is also found in Isouard's overtures to *Les Rendez-vous Bourgeois*, and *Joconde,* and in the *Ouverture* to the joint collaboration between Isouard and Rodolphe Kreutzer, *Flaminius à Corinthe*.[91] This had been first performed at the Opéra in February 1801, soon after Isouard's arrival in Paris. Stylistically, this 'Malta' Sinfonia may date from around 1794, when the composer was writing *L'avviso ai maritati* for Florence, as there are similarities in the style. One particular feature in the Sinfonia is the term *battute* for the violins in bars 121 and 122 - a performance technique often used by Rossini in his earlier operatic overtures, but rarely, if ever seen in music of this Maltese period. I should note that both terms are utilised in *L'avviso*, Isouard's second opera.

In conclusion, there is every possibility that this Sinfonia could be a missing overture from one of his Maltese operas. These extend to ten works supposedly composed in the pre-1798 period - starting with his first work for the stage, the One Act *Casaciello, perseguitato da un mago* of 1793, to his final opera presented on Malta, the *Commedia per musica* composed and presented in the *Carnevale* of 1798*, Il barone d'Alba chiara*. Apart from the full score and set of parts of *L'avviso ai maritati*, and the couple of excerpts of his *opera seria Artaserse*, not one extract remains from these other operas and they remain unmentioned in diaries or documents of the period. The only scores that survive are the two revisions into French of his sixth and seventh operas from the Maltese period, *Il bottaio* of 1796-7, which in 1801 became *Le tonnelier*, and *L'improvisata in campagna*, of 1797, which was refashioned also in 1801 into *L'impromptu de campagne*. Could this lack of documentary evidence possibly mean that some of the works were a figment of the composer's imagination, and that were simply invented to support a career portfolio for his operatic introduction to Paris? Regretfully, until some supportive evidence appears, one simply cannot tell. A full list of Isouard's stage works, including these operas from his Maltese period is to be found in the catalogue in the appendix entitled 'Operas and *Opéras-comiques'*.

[91] Nicolò Isouard-Rodolphe Kreutzer, *Falminius à Corinthe,* FS ms, Bibl Nat. Paris. Edition of the overture by Richard Divall. Gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque Nationale ark:/ 12148/btv1b520005968.

39. Missa Defunctorum – Requiem.



Place and date of composition

The work was re-orchestrated, possibly either as an exercise in the 1790's, during the time of Isouard's study in Naples or more probably later in his life in Paris. The watermarks of the manuscript paper would provide the earliest likely dating, but I do not have access to that information.

Text and Liturgical function

This work is a complete re-orchestration of the *Missa pro defunctis* in E flat major of Niccolò Jommelli (1714-1774).

Instrumental/vocal forces

Solo soprano, alto, tenor and bass voices, and four-part chorus. Flutes I and II, oboes I and II, clarinets I and II in B flat, bassoons I and II, horns I and II, trombones I and II, timpani, strings, with violas. To this orchestration a possible organ continuo might need to be added, an instrument that might be essential in the sections where Isouard made no additions to Jommelli's original orchestration.

The source

Conservatoire royal de musique, Brussels, Belgium. Cat. No. B-Bc/158. RISM No. 705000420. The manuscript is 171 pages in length, with the entire notation for woodwind, brass and timpani written in Isouard's hand. The manuscript was originally in the library of François Louis Perne (1772-1832), who from 1819 was Librarian of the Conservatoire in Paris. Perne had begun his musical career as a chorister in the Opéra, but from 1799 was employed as a double bass player in various theatres, where, no doubt he would have become familiar with the newly arrived Isouard.[92]

Commentary.

After Isouard's death on 23 March 1818, the inventory of his properties and assets was compiled on 6 April 1818 by Charles Bochsa *père*, Louis Charles Castel (*hommes de lettres*), Philippe Petit (editor of music), the librettist Charles Guillaume Etienne, Deschambeaux,

[92] Also a composer, Perne's sacred compositions are also held in the same library in Brussels.

Lemaitre and the Parisian notary Lamaze.[93] Although there is a tantalising entry of *'169-neuf cent cinquante neuf planches dont cinquante six du Stabat Mater',* there is no mention of Isouard possessing a copy of the E flat requiem Mass by Jommelli in his extensive and musically diverse library.[94] But this holograph by the composer is a most interesting work, in both its history and in Isouard's orchestration of a sacred work by an earlier composer, by adding a full set of double woodwinds and brass. This orchestration tells us many things about this composer's own compositional style and methods.

Although excerpts of the inventory of Isouard's effect are published in Azzopardi, especially items numbers 144 to 169, many of the unpublished items reveal much about Isouard's life-style. Items numbers one to seventeen certify that the composer had a very extensive collection of wines in his apartment. The other is his collection of books, including the works of Pietro Metastasio, are several intriguing mentions of personalities in the Order of Malta, including the previous Grand *Bailli* of the Anglo-Bavarian Langue, Baron Frà Johannes Baptist von Flachslanden (1739-1825).[95]

Niccolò Jommelli's *Missa pro defunctis* in E flat was composed around the year 1755 or early 1756. It was first performed for the obsequies of Maria Augusta, the mother of Karl Eugen, Duke of Württemberg, who had died on 1 February 1756. The composer had arrived in Stuttgart on 10 August 1753 from Rome, to take up the position of *Ober-capellmeister*, at the invitation of Karl Eugen, who was a fanatical opera lover. [96] In his new position he presented his first opera there on 30 August of that same year – *La Clemenza di Tito*, to the libretto by Metastasio. The post of *Ober-capellmeister* in the Stuttgart court was one of considerable power and responsibility, and one which facilitated Jommelli presenting his four French based operas and others on the modified Metastasian Italian model in Stuttgart, in the great new theatre at Ludwigsburg that was later inaugurated in 1764. Some of these works followed the innovations in theatrical reforms instituted by Tomasso Traetta in Turin,

[93] F-Archives Nationales, M C/Et. LXII, n. 825. The text is only partially reproduced in Azzopardi, p. 77-80, focusing especially on Articles 144-169 which refer the the holdings of Isouard's scores and musical library.
[94] Apart from the excerpts from his young *Stabat Mater* (edition number 30), I have found no other references to a work bearing this title by Isouard.
[95] Thomas Freller, *The Anglo-Bavarian Langue of the Order of Malta* (Pietà, Malta: PIN-Pubblikazzjonijiet Indipendenza, 2001), 60-70.
[96] Maurício Dottori, 58.

and judging from some of his scores, even possibly the Maltese Girolamo Abos. In his previous appointments at the Ospedale degl' Incurabili in Venice (c.1744-1747), and later as chapel master at St Peter's Basilica in Rome (1749-c.1753), Jommelli had increasingly composed for the church. His early two oratorios, *La Betulia* (1742), and *Isacco* (1743), were composed not for Venice but for Genoa, including one for the Oratory of S Filippo Neri.[97] Many authorities at the time, including Metastasio and Davide Perez mention Jommelli as being drawn to writing sacred music, although his ebullient personality was very much suited to composing for the theatre, and in this he was a master. In his compositions his imaginative and instinctive sense of drama is always to the fore, especially in his descriptive evocations of sacred texts set to music.

In Württemberg, Duke Karl Eugen spared no cost in obtaining the best singers and players for the court theatre and the chapel. Jommelli's letters, to the court in Lisbon provide interesting details of his approach to writing sacred music, and the liturgy was uppermost in his mind.[98] One valuable study of Jommelli's sacred music by Wolfgang Hochstein goes into great detail on the genesis and composition and style of his sacred pieces.[99]

Jommelli's *Missa pro defunctis*, written for four voice choir and soloists (SATB), with strings and organ continuo, achieved great popularity throughout Europe, with over eighty manuscript copies surviving in various libraries. Almost composed throughout in a key signature of three flats, the opening *Requiem aeternam* section begins in E flat major and not in C minor. It avoids monotony by shifting in the *Te decet hymnus* in some manuscripts to B flat major, and in the following *Christe eleison* to the related key of C minor.[100] The first *Dum veneris judicare* and the *Tremens factus sum* return to E flat major, and to G minor for appropriate passages that are of a sombre-funereal nature (*Dies irae, dies illa*). Far from being tonally monotonous to the ear, in the eighteenth century, this related tonality would have been a positive affirmation of the promise contained in the Resurrection of Christ. It is

[97] Differing dates are given in Marita McClymonds, 'Jommelli, Nicolò', *The New Grove* and by other authors. Dottori, 185, n.46.
[98] Marita McClymonds, *Niccolò Jommelli: The Final Years 1769-1774* (Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1980).
[99] Wolfgand Hochstein, *Die Kirchenmusik von Niccolò Jommelli (1714-1774), unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der liturgisch gebundenen Komponistionen* (Hildesheim, Georg Olms, 1984)
[100] The *Te decet hymnus*, and in B flat major, is to be found in the manuscript full score in the Majella Library in Naples, I-Nc, but was not included in the Isouard version. See footnote 89.

an extremely fine work, and one that would have been familiar to the young Isouard during his study periods in Naples and also in France. Speed was required in the original composition, as the official court Mass was celebrated only eight days after the death of Maria Augusta. According to tradition composed in only three days, Jommelli self-borrowed from other works.[101] These included sections from his *Missa breve* of 1745, which he utilised for the *Christe eleison*. The *Et in saecula-Amen* was borrowed from his setting composed in Venice, of the *Laudate pueri.*

Although over eighty manuscripts of the original work survive, there are many variants. Only one modern edition of the work is published, edited by Hermann Müller and published by Edition Kunzelmann.[102] This printed edition is based on the manuscript copied out for a Herr Rod Oeri in 1783 by the copyist Braun Speyr, and contains inaccuracies.[103] In this edition, the work concludes with the *Lux aeterna* to the final text *quia pius es*. However in the manuscript held in the Library of the Majella Conservatorium there are several additional sections at the end that remain unpublished.[104] Of interest is that this score also belonged to Isouard's teacher at the Turchini, Nicola Sala. These additional movements, namely the *Libera me Domine, Quando coeli movendi sunt, Dum veneris judicare, Tremens factus sum ego*, and the final *Dies illa* are also included in the manuscript version that Isouard utilised.

Jommelli provides the work with an effective beginning and ending in using the same opening musical material to the appropriate text near the end. In this Requiem Mass, Jommelli omits several sections, including the *introit* verse, following the Italian tradition of

[101] From an inscription on a manuscript of the work held in Naples.
[102] Jommelli, N. *Requiem für Soli, Chor, Streichorchester und Orgel* (Zürich, Edition Kunzelmann, 1986). The German publishes Cranz (1861) and Peters (1866), issued vocal scores of this work. The publisher Litolff in Brunswick produced a vocal score in 1883, edited by the Hanoverian musician Otto Heinrich Lange. The vocal lines have been substantially 'improved' by the editor, with the addition of staccato points and accent marks, and it is an unreliable source.
[103] Allgemeine Musik-Gesellschaft Zürich – Zentral bibliothek AMG XIV 712. There is an additional set of performing parts in the same library, but it is not sure if they are based on the same manuscript of the full score.
[104] *Missa Pro Defunctis Del D. Niccola Jommelli Napolitano. Wittembergh* 1766 (1756) *Per uso del Real Cons :rio.* Biblioteca de Conservatorio di musica S. Pietro a Majella – Napoli NA – (collocazione) 21.6.8. The manuscript is available on the Italian website Internetculturale, identification code IT\ICCU\MSM\0152867.

the time. As Maurício Dottori cites, 'before the Council of Trent, these were parts of the Mass where the text varied from region to region'.[105]

Isouard re-orchestrated this work for a classical period instrumental ensemble, adding pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, two trombones and timpani.[106] The Brussels manuscript consists of a copyist's score of the original written on the lower nine staves, with an additional eight staves hand ruled above with a slightly larger stave pen, for Isouard's additions to the score. The string accompaniment and the vocal lines were basically left as Jommelli had originally written them, but the differing effect is striking.[107] The use of the two trombones, which are independent of the lower voice parts, gives a sombre funeral texture to the overall sound. Throughout the *Missa*, Isouard often writes for the woodwinds in the lower register, whilst the trombones are generally used in octaves. The two bassoon parts are rarely divisi, and the clarinets are often in unison with either the oboes or the flutes. I will restrict my comments to observations on Isouard's contribution to the original score.

The work opens in a solemn texture with the *Requiem aeternam*, using timpani that are marked muted (*voilée*) in the score. The copyist replaces the slurs in the violins with the 'trill' sign indicating an *espressivo* so often used in the eighteenth-century. The woodwinds are written low on the stave as a syncopated 'pulsing' effect, which is only relieved when the text begins with solo soprano and alto voices at the *et lux perpetua* (and may light eternal shine on them). Here the violins ascend to the top of the treble stave with a singing motif interspersed with interweaving solo flutes and oboes. It is a hauntingly beautiful passage, so evocative of these opening two lines of the Latin text.

The *Kyrie eleison* introduces the trombones for the first time - the upper woodwinds and the bassoons and trombones following the voices in unison. Isouard deliberately makes no changes or additions to the original version of the *Christe eleison*, where Jommelli's accompaniment pleadingly evoking the text with divided viola lines, and emotional

[105] Maurício Dottori, 85.
[106] There are no trumpets in the orchestration.
[107] Isouard makes a few corrections where there are anomalies or mistakes in the copyist's notation, but rarely alters Jomeill's original intentions.

descending phrases in the first violins. The second *Kyrie*, though using the same thematic material as the first, is completely different in both the placement of the vocal lines and the orchestration. Again Isouard adds nothing to the first section of the *Dies Irae*, relying on the powerful chordal statements and the alternatively flashing and pleading violin writing of Jommelli's original. But he makes one change from the original vocal parts, in allocating the tenor solo *Quantus tremor*, of seven bars, to the solo soprano voice. Even at the *Rex tremendo* (where Isouard uses the Italian spelling of *tremendo* instead of the Latin *tremendae*), the composer makes no orchestral additions to the score. The quartet of soloists is employed in the *Salva me*, and again without any orchestral changes. But at the entry of the *Lacrymosa dies*, in an effective and emotional touch, Isouard adds descant legato woodwind phrases above the voices. Up to the text of *huic ergo, parce Deus*, the scoring remains sparse, but tasteful. In the choral fugato movement of the *Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem*, Isouard reintroduces the woodwinds in weaving and at times emotionally conceived lines. The concluding *Amen* is again scored in the same restrained and tasteful manner. Isouard was utilising his experienced theatrical instincts to good effect in complementing and amplifying the meaning of the text.

The *Offertorium – Domine Jesu Christe, Rex gloriae* begins without any alteration. But at the *Libera eas de ore leonis* (deliver them from the lion's mouth), Isouard unleashes the entire orchestral ensemble in a sustained *forte*. After an exciting canonic passage he continues in this vein, to the end of the section with the hushed text *quam olim Abrahae, et semini ejus*. The quartet of soloists then takes over in the *Hostias et preces tibi*, in a gentle 3/8 section in C minor, which leads into a *Da capo al Fine* repetition of the chorus *Quam olim Abrahae*. Isouard seems to be deliberately holding back the orchestral effects that are available to him, by capitalising on the restrained original orchestration by Jommelli. They were both experienced men of the lyric theatre.

In both the *Sanctus* and the following *Hosanna*, Isouard fully orchestrates both sections. The *Sanctus* is grandly scored with flutes and divided violas, but by omitting the trombones, he gives brightness to the orchestral palette. After the initial opening statement of eighteen bars, the *Hosanna* is scored triumphantly for the entire orchestral ensemble. Jommelli's setting of the serene *Benedictus* is retained without any change, although there are some

minor changes to the detailed string writing. The gently floating lines of the soprano solo voice contrast with the quasi canonic writing of the strings section, which leads into a repetition of the grand *Hosanna*.

Isouard uses his gift for writing emotional but simple woodwind lines to great effect in the three supplications of the *Agnus Dei*. Legato singing descants from the oboes and the bassoons, weaving over the dotted string accompaniment, lead immediately into the *Dona eis requiem*. Here the composer utilises trumpet like pedal fanfares from the oboes over the double fugue entries in the voices and strings. The opening fifty-three bars of the *Dona eis*, set for solo voices in the original have no solo or chorus instructions. This chorus in 3/8 leads *subito segue* into the *Lux aeterna luceat eis* for choir, which is marked *Fuga tutti forte*. Here there is grand heroic wind and brass writing, punctuated by occasional dotted chords. At the return of the text *Requiem aeternam dona eis,* the score returns to the material of the opening movement of the entire work. It is a calculated change, thoroughly and theatrically utilising the unexpected shift of emotion in the text. Suddenly, in an *allegro alla breve* chorus to the text *Cum sanctis tuis in aeternum*, Isouard uses the entire orchestra briefly, before ending on a calm and contemplative ending on *quia pius es*. The final four bars are mournfully intoned by repeated E flat major chords in all of the woodwinds.

In the *Libera me, Domine*, Jomelli introduces the text with two solo sopranos singing in duet form, and then the repeated text is reinforced in dotted *forte* exclamations from the entire chorus. In this movement, the following chorus *Quando movendi sunt et terra*, and in the *Dum veneris judicare*, Isouard adds nothing to the original scoring. However he deletes a ten bar bridge passage from the original for the strings, which acts as a prelude to the soprano aria *Tremens factus sum ego*. It is a thoughtful and skilful short cut, as it propels the ending of the Mass forward towards its finale. Again in this *Tremens* aria, with its 'breathless' pulsing accompaniment, and in the concluding movement of the work, the achingly beautiful *Dies illa, dies irae*, *calamitatis*, Isouard strategically makes no additions to Jommelli's original intentions. It is a deliberate and well-judged arrangement, worthy of Mozart in his re-orchestration of Handel's works, *The Messiah*, the cantata set to John Dryden's libretto of *Alexander's Feast* and the angelic *Ode to Saint Cecilia*. In this respect,

Isouard was a worthy and respectful successor in the practice of 'improving' on the works of ancient masters.

The only question that remains to be answered is – when did Isouard undertake this arrangement of this classic Requiem by Niccolò Jommelli? In my opinion, the original copyist's score of the original Jommelli version is neither by an Italian nor a German copyist, but rather one written by a French scribe. Without knowing the watermarks of the paper used in this arrangement, one will not be able to provide an authoritative opinion. But judging by the secure orchestration, and also the rapidity in which the additions have been written by Isouard, I venture to suggest that it is a late work in this composer's life.

4. Postlude.

In 1798, little did Isouard realise that his involvement in sacred music on Malta would be precipitously coming to an end, and that for the remainder of his life he would write only one more known sacred work – his re-orchestration of the Jommelli Requiem Mass. From that year, and his time in Paris onwards, he would devote himself almost exclusively to composing music for the opera theatre, together with some songs. In this medium he achieved considerable fame, and it is not for nothing that a bust of Nicolò Isouard shares a place of honour, amongst those gracing the pediments of the Palais Garnier in Paris.[108]

[108] The other composers so honoured include Meyerbeer, Rossini, Mozart and Beethoven, Gaspare Spontini and Fromental Halévy. Two librettists are also honoured, and they are Eugéne Scribe who wrote works for Verdi, Meyerbeer and Donizetti, and Philippe Quinault, the principal librettist for Jean-Baptiste Lully. Sadly neither Lully nor Jean-Philippe Rameau were accorded their place on the exterior of the Palais Garnier.

Chapter Four – Influences, Comparisons and Conclusions

'DIVO PAULO MELITENSIUM PROTOPARENTE'[1]

Influences and Comparisons.

To draw this study together, and to achieve an understanding of Isouard in context, this final chapter offers the opportunity to consider his work within the broader context of sacred music composed on Malta in the eighteenth-century. This requires a reconsideration of the churches themselves where the liturgy was celebrated with substantial choral and instrumental music, as well as the demands of the liturgical calendar, the saints and the *Coeremoniale* of the Order of St John, and also by the local devotions and musical traditions of the Maltese church. It is important that these liturgical observances of the Order, and of the Maltese Diocesan Church, are examined in order to explain the priorities that composers on Malta gave to their settings of particular sacred texts. This broader understanding is fundamental to any assessment of the extent that traditions and practices are reflected in the choice of sacred texts and musical settings of Nicolò Isouard. Moreover, and given the fact that Isouard shifted his attention to composing opera and music for the theatre for the remainder of his working life after leaving Malta, these observations serve to assist making more subtle distinctions about the role of the church as a patron, and the place of the composer within its structures of power and authority. This was an age when the world was changing, and Europe was on the brink of an era in which creative artists would be acknowledged for their genius rather than their craftsmanship. In this scenario, it can be useful to interrogate the extent to which composers such as Isouard were primarily working to express a collective and institutional language for the glorification of God, or the level to which their personal faith and beliefs were responsible for forging modes of musical expression that would become widely adopted by the communities they served.

[1] John Azzopardi and Thomas Freller, *Pauline Malta – The Formation of a Nation's Identity* (Malta: Fondazzjoni Patri Caruana OP, in association with the Wignacourt Museum, 2010), 19.

1. Development of Cults or Devotions on Malta.

The inscription *DIVO PAULO MELITENSIUM PROTOPARENTE* carved in stone above the principal front doors of Mdina Cathedral pronounces the local tradition that 'Malta owes its Christian faith to St Paul'.[2] The importance of St Paul and his shipwreck on Malta in AD 60 is part of Malta's 'collective memory and spiritual milieu, not to mention a strong patriotic element'.[3] But with the arrival of the Order in 1530, the saint thereafter shared the spiritual spotlight with the patron saint of the Order, St John the Baptist. This veneration was shared with St Catherine of Siena, St Lawrence, St Agatha, St Publius who was the first Bishop of Malta, St Anne in Fort St Angelo, and of course the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Mother of God was venerated under many different titles on Malta, including Our Lady of Victories, the Feast of which is still celebrated on Malta's national day, the eighth of September.[4] In the church of that name, the first built in Valletta, were two altars dedicated to both the Baptist and to St Paul - a combination that was frequently seen on Malta. From the arrival of the Order on Malta in 1530, both saints had become the spiritual guardians of the island.[5]

On Malta, each of these two primary saints had special places of veneration - St Paul's being in the Shipwreck Church in Valletta, and in the church and grotto at Rabat, where according to tradition he had been imprisoned. The church of St Paul at Rabat, built over this grotto, was appropriately a 'double-church'. Designed in two parts by the architect Lorenzo Gafà, it was completed in 1683.[6] The left hand church was devoted to the parish, and the entrance to the subterranean grotto was entered by another chapel on the right hand side, which was maintained and devoted to the religious observances of the knights and chaplains of the Order.[7]

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[2] Azzopardi, and Freller, *Pauline Malta – The Formation of a Nation's Identity,* 19.
[3] Ibid. p. 282-3.
[4] The Church of Our Lady of Victories was the first church constructed in Valletta itself. Designed by the two key architects of the planning and the construction of the city of Valletta, Francesco Laparelli and Girolamo (Gerolamo) Cassar, the church was completed in 1578, although the foundation stone had been laid for the city on that spot on 28 March 1566 by Grand Master La Valette. Recently in 2012, a square was inaugurated in front of this Church, and the Casa Lanfreduci, the Headquarters of the Maltese Association of The Order of Malta, with the first statue of La Valette in the city that bears his name.
[5] Azzopardi and Freller, 292.
[6] Maltese born architect, Lorenzo Gafà (1638-1703) also designed and built St Paul's Cathedral in Mdina, which was rebuilt from 1697-1702, after the great earthquake of 1693.
[7] Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt had founded and built the Collegiate Palace immediately adjacent to the church. The site had been popularised by a Spanish gentleman, Señor Juan Benegas from Cordova, who promoted the place as a centre for pilgrimage and who lived there as a hermit. In 1617 the grotto was

St John the Baptist was venerated in the Conventual Church of St John in Valletta, where the relic of his right hand, given to Grand Master d'Aubusson on Rhodes was preserved in a gilt monstrance throne reliquary.[8] Commissioned by Grand Master Gregorio Carafa (1680-1690), it was designed by Ciro Ferri.[9] These designs were then superbly realised by the great Roman silversmith, Urbano Bartalesi (1641-1726), and is an outstanding example of baroque art on the islands.[10] In addition to the usual saints amongst the Apostles, the Evangelists and others, the saints and martyrs of the Order were particularly remembered, both in prayer and in art, and many paintings exist on Malta representing these past members of the Order.[11]

The aftermath of the Great Siege of 1565 saw the construction of a large number of new churches. This burst of activity was also reflected in a significant rise in the number of religious confraternities on the Islands.[12] It can be said that the Maltese population in general became more religious in their devotions and culture during this period. Whilst the Order was predominately concerned with the building of churches and monasteries within Valletta itself, the diocesan church on Malta initiated the construction of an unprecedented number of parish churches. These were initially grouped around the two harbour cities of the Birgu (Bormula) and Senglea, both of which had sustained the greatest damage during the Ottoman invasion.

It is during this period that development of existing cults and new devotions associated with either the Order or the Maltese people manifested themselves. As it was, by 1798, the Order was the religious superior of twenty-four churches that were attached to each of the *Langues* and monasteries, and an equivalent number of chapels. These were situated either in fortifications and larger guard towers, or in the various palaces that were part of the

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entrusted to the Order of St John, and the Collegiate Palace, now the Wignacourt Museum, housed the community of chaplains who maintained the spiritual activities that focused around the grotto.

[8] Mario Buhagiar, *Essays on the Knights and Art and Architecture in Malta 1500-1798* (Malta: Midsea Books, 2009), 93.

[9] Ciro Ferri (1634-1689) was the pupil of Pietro da Cortona. His works include prominent frescoes in the Quirinale Palace in Rome (1656-1659), and in the Pitti palace in Florence (1659-1665). A painter as well as a designer, Ferri not only designed works for printing, but also practised as an architect.

[10] The reliquary has recently been restored in 2009. Keith Sciberras, *Roman Baroque Sculpture for the Knights of Malta* (Midsea Books: Valletta, 2012), 152-174.

[11] These artistic references to the saints of the Order survive in numerous paintings held in the National Art Gallery in Valletta, the Cathedral Museum in Mdina and especially in the Wignacourt Museum in Rabat.

[12] David Rossi, 'Charity and Confraternal Piety in Malta and Sicily from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century' (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Malta, 2002).

Grand Master's household.[13] In the annual liturgical life of the Conventual Church, each day of the week was dedicated to a particular saint, or to the various relics of the Order. For example, Wednesday was dedicated to St John the Baptist, Friday to the veneration of the relic of a piece of the True Cross, and Saturday to the Icon of our Lady of Philerme.[14] Similarly other liturgical events were focused around relics held in the Church, and processions on Feast Days and during the Easter *triduum*. The Order had a complete calendar of devotions throughout the year, and these, fully listed in Scarabelli, were punctiliously adhered to.

The greatest number of churches and chapels on Malta dedicated to particular places of worship in the sixteenth century were those associated with the Blessed Virgin - a total of 315 shrines. Numerically, the highest number was dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady (115), followed numerically by the Nativity (45), the Rosary Madonna (39), and the Annunciation (33). The number of churches and chapels on Malta dedicated to God, in his various manifestations were forty-six. The Evangelists and Apostles accounted for a further fifty-nine and the remaining 209 places of worship were dedicated to the saints, from St Agatha to St Zachary.[15] Coincidentally, at this time, St Paul and St John the Baptist both had nineteen places dedicated to their devotion. The cults of the various saints on Malta and the devotions of the Order are again thoroughly documented by Scarabelli.[16] This magisterial work is supplemented, and complemented in considerable detail in Vincent Borg's volumes, published to date in the series *Melita Sacra*.[17] After 1798, when Napoleon expelled the knights, St Paul became the property of the Maltese, but not to the detriment of the other cults that flourished on the islands.

Despite the presence of educated members of the Order, compared to other countries, such as Austria and Bavaria, on eighteenth-century Malta the diocesan church remained a relative backwater. In Austria, then part of the Holy Roman Empire, Josephine reforms had prepared the church there to withstand the violence and arbitrary land-grabbing of the

[13] Giovanni Scarabelli*, Culto e Devozioni dei Cavalieri a Malta (The Coeremoniale and the Calendarium),* in the series Catalogue of the Records of the Order of St John or Jerusalem (Rome: The University of Malta, 2004), 37-39.
[14] Scarabelli, 48.
[15] Vincent Borg, *Melita Sacra I*, *The Maltese Diocese prior to 1500*., in two parts; and *Melita Sacra II, The Maltese Diocese during the Sixteenth Century* (Malta: APS Bank, 2008-9), 721-2.
[16] Scarabelli, Giovanni*. Culto e Devozioni dei Cavalieri a Malta.*
[17] Vincent Borg, *Melita Sacra I.*

Napoleonic turmoil. Less resistance was possible in the face of the rapacity of some of the confiscations in the Italian States. Earlier, the suppression of the Society of Jesus, and the occasional violence that accompanied the confiscations of their properties in Spain, Portugal, and their colonial territories, ought to have been a warning. Even on Malta, the influence of the Portuguese Prime Minister, the Marquis of Pombal, ensured that Grand Master Pinto, himself Portuguese born, would 'toe the line', and abide by the new reality. The dissolution of the Society was eventually pronounced by Pope Clement XIV in 1773.[18] On 23 April 1768, the Pope's chief defenders, the Jesuits, were suddenly expelled from Malta, although unlike some expulsions, they were provided with food and refreshments by the Order for their sea journey to the Papal States.[19] To be fair, the Grand Master in 1744 had also exiled Jansenists who had expressed hostility to the Papal Bull *Unigenitus Dei Filius* of 1713, a proclamation which was later upheld by Benedict XII and Clement XII.[20]

Ruled by the Order, itself a church entity, Malta existed in a conservative religious milieu, but it was also an expansive society in religious terms. The Synod of Pistoia (1786), which granted the Holy Father only an 'honourable primacy', was basically ignored by the conservative diocesan hierarchy on Malta, who gave their complete obedience to the Pope.[21] Ecclesiastical writers on Malta, Francesco Agius (1712-1770), Ignazio Mifsud (1722-1773), and the Capuchin Palagio (1707-1781) were all essentially conservative on the

[18] Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, Marquis of Pombal, was Prime Minister of Portugal from 1750 to 1777, and led the way in seeking the abolition of the Jesuit possessions in Portuguese lands. The expulsion of the Portuguese Jesuits in 1759, followed by those from Spanish territories in 1768, was accompanied at times with violence, and disregard for their personal safety. Catherine of Russia contemptuously ignored the Papal Bull (*Dominus ac Redemptor*) of Clement XIV, issued in 1773, and the Society of Jesus continued to minister in countries under her rule. Similarly, the edict was nominally disregarded in China, where the Jesuits were of real value to the Manchu Dynasty, especially in their accurate predictions of the auspicious movements of the 'heavenly bodies', so essential in guiding Chinese government and society. Amongst the Jesuit missionaries in China were several composers including Jean Joseph Marie Amiot. Born in Toulon in 1718, Amiot stayed on in China after the abolition of the Society in 1773, and served under the succeeding Vincentian (Lazarist) Order. He wrote music, some of it set to liturgical texts in Chinese and died in Beijing in 1793, having been advised, the day before, of the execution of Louis XVI. Some of Amiot's music, and that of his earlier fellow composer in China, Teodorico Pedrini (1671-1746) has been recorded.

[19] Carmel Testa, *The Life and Times of Grand Master Pinto 1741-1773* (Valletta: Midsea Books, 1989), 284. The Jesuits sailed from Malta on a French ship, *Le Soleil* to Civitavecchia where they arrived on 7 May, after an eight day voyage. In correspondence (27 August 2012), Dr Simon Mercieca suggested to me that the Society of Jesus was not entirely popular with the knights of the Order. This may be the reason why the Discalced Carmelites were invited to Malta by Grand Master Adrien de Wignacourt in 1625. The knights did their retreats with that Order in their monastery in Cospicua, which was completed in 1626.

[20] AIM, Mdina, Corr. 27, f. 144r, Cardinal Tommaso Ruffo to the Inquisitor on Malta, Luigi Gualtiero, later Cardinal, 22 September 1744.

[21] Florence, AS, Fondo Ricci, vol. 74, 178, Cardinal Gioannetti to Mgr Scipione de' Ricci, 30 Oct. 1790.

subject, and even the Chaplains of the Order might have found the first encyclical of Clement XIV, *Cum summi apostolates* of 1770, with its admonition to give all to the poor, rather puzzling, if a little unsettling.[22] But this was not to say that the church was compliant, or the parishioners sublimated.

Religious piety as practised on Malta was embellished by the exuberant manners and mores of the Maltese, who like their Neapolitan counterparts, rejoiced in processions of statues and clergy, and spectacular depictive art and music. Pope Benedict XIV's prohibition of trumpets and some other musical instruments in the liturgy was not particularly followed by the Order, though possibly for economy's sake, it was restrictively adhered to by the smaller parish churches on the islands.[23] And the Order, as secular ruler of the Maltese archipelago, indulged its secular and sacred grandeur, in music performed by the *cappella* of the Conventual Church. As the Venetian Ambassador to the Order, Gasparo Soderini, observed in 1781, the knights and the Order were all members of a religious entity, which whilst under the religious aegis of the Holy Father, was the exempt and grand secular sovereign of Malta at the same time.[24] In the European political context, it was almost a unique position.[25]

2. Patterns or non-patterns in Eighteenth Century Maltese Sacred Music.

In searching for patterns in the texts of the sacred music held in the Cathedral Museum at Mdina, and the Wignacourt Museum at Rabat, and taking into account the above prevailing religious cults revered on Malta, it is surprising that no real definitive threads emerge. In fact, it would appear that in the eighteenth-century there was no distinctive pattern in the composition of sacred music. Of course there was the obvious essential of supplying music of the Mass, and the many antiphons, graduals, vespers, hymns, motets and offertories that

[22] Frans Ciappara, 'The Maltese Catholic Enlightenment', in *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment in Europe,* ed. by Ulrich L. Lehner and Michael Printy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 261.

[23] On 19 February 1749 Benedict XIV had issued an edict that prohibited trumpets in the liturgy, although it allowed strings, bassoons and the organ in sacred music. Judging from the scores of sacred music by Haydn etc., the edict was largely ignored, although it was occasionally adhered to for some time in the Austrian capital. The effects of the bull on Malta can be seen in the attempts of Bishop Alpheran in constraining a theatrical license sometimes employed at the time in Maltese liturgical music. I have commented on the effects that this edict had on the surviving sacred music of Michel' Angelo Vella,

[24] Michele Fassina, *Corrispondenze Diplomatiche Veneziane da Napoli – Relazioni* (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, 1992), 44.

[25] Curiously, but providentially it remains so today, surviving as a Sovereign Entity in International Law.

were part of the liturgy. In addition to these, there are the obvious works composed for Holy Week and the responses for the season of Easter. The performance of vocal and instrumental music for the liturgy would have been restricted to larger churches and monasteries, such as in Valletta, and in the Birgu (St Lawrence's Church), and the Cospicua Collegiate Church, as well as in Mdina, Rabat, and in the citadel (Gran Castello) and the city of Victoria, both on Gozo.[26]

With the fortuitous gathering of manuscripts of sacred music from various places and family collections on Malta, such as the purchase of Francesco Azopardi's scores from his family, and those of Benigno Zerafa, there now exists a considerable corpus of eighteenth-century Maltese sacred music that provides material for comparison and review. The published catalogue of the Mdina Cathedral Museum, edited by Dun Gwann Azzopardi and Matteo Sansone in 2001, provides a comprehensive overview of the music utilised at that cathedral, as well as providing information on additional manuscripts donated from collections.[27] This essential volume complements the catalogue of the holdings of the Wignacourt Museum, also compiled by Dun Gwann Azzopardi, as well as the volume on the printed collections of Italian sacred compositions held in the Mdina Cathedral Museum by Franco Bruni.[28]

The Maltese composers of the late eighteenth-century who are primarily represented in the holdings of the Cathedral Museum and the Wignacourt Museum are Francesco Azopardi and Benigno Zerafa. These collections of their manuscripts enable an assessment to be made of patterns (and the absence of patterns through the insufficiency of materials) of liturgical composition on Malta, especially during the period when Nicolò Isouard was resident on the island. Sadly, so little remains of Michel' Angelo Vella's sacred works, that no viable comparison can be made with regard to this composer, who together with Francesco Azopardi was one of Isouard's teachers on Malta. In support of my observations I will briefly examine the output and compositional styles of both Azopardi and Zerafa.

[26] The original name for the city was Rabat, and that name is still used by Gozitans when referring to that place. The later name was bestowed in 1897, on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee by the then ruling British administration of the islands.

[27] John Azzopardi and Matteo Sansone, *Italian and Maltese Music in the Archives at the Cathedral Museum of Malta* (Malta: Hill Monastic Manuscript Library, St John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota in association with the [Mdina] Cathedral Museum, 2001).

[28] Franco Bruni, *Stampe Musicali Italiane alla Cattedrale di Malta* (Malta: PEG Publications, 1999).

Zerafa's music is fully catalogued in Azzopardi and Sansone, and listed in Aquilina.[29] His works comprise no less than eight setting of the Mass, seven settings of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria*, as well as *pezzi staccati* from the Ordinary of the Mass. Several of these works are for double sets of four voices or choirs, similar to Abos Mass in G major.[30] As a priest-composer, Zerafa set many introits, graduals and offertories, and although St Paul has one dedicated work, there is no music by this composer in commemoration of St John the Baptist. Perhaps the patron saint of the Order of St John was already celebrated enough in the Conventual Church in Valletta. Zerafa composed no less than eight full settings of the *Dixit Dominus*, and three settings of the *Dixit Dominus breve*. One composition, a setting of the *Nisi Dominus*, is written with an obbligato mandolin in the orchestration (MS 305 – 4. September 1764).[31] Zerafa also composed four settings of the Canticle, the *Magnificat* – the first being written at the commencement of his employment at the Cathedral, in 1744, and the last in 1758. Unlike his contemporary and fellow cleric, Michel' Angelo Vella, there are no secular compositions by this composer, and with the only theatre being in Valletta and not Mdina, that would seem obvious and appropriate.

Most of Zerafa's music is in the earlier Neapolitan *galante* style that was so pervasive on Malta. Out of his 148 compositions, no less than 130 are set in major keys. The works are melodic, but with many series of suspensions, and choral sequences of sevenths. The arias for solo voice are generally lyrical in nature, whilst many of the choruses are more contrapuntal in style. Like Isouard, the opening *ritornello* of each work, especially in the solo arias, provides the statement that prefaces the melodic and emotional structure and form of the following music. Unlike Abos and Azopardi, the Masses of Zerafa, primarily written from 1744 to 1760, are more episodic in character, and reflect the earlier phase of his compositional career. He only wrote four Masses after the year 1760 – the remainder of his works in the later period being directed towards motets and Holy Week responses. It is as though, within the first fifteen years of his direction of the cathedral music, he devoted himself to providing a respectable portfolio of Masses and larger scale music for his

[29] Frederick Aquilina. 'A Mid-Eighteenth-Century Maltese Composer of Sacred Music – A short biography of Benigno Zerafa (1726-1804)', *Eighteenth century Music* 4 (2007): 107-118.

[30] Girolamo Abos, Mass for 8 voices and 2 orchestras. F-Pn. A modern edition of this work has been edited by Richard Divall.

[31] The obvious parallel use of the mandolin occurs in Antonio Vivaldi's oratorio *Juditha Triumphans* of 1716. This obbligato occurs in the aria *Transit aetas, volant anni*. It is unlikely that Zerafa would have known this score, but because of his six years of study in Naples, his familiarity with the instrument would be undoubted.

employer, the Bishop of Malta. It might be that this was the same 'portfolio' policy that Isouard adopted, in his seeking permanent employment with the Order at St John's. Some of Zerafa's music has considerable charm and melodic felicity, whilst other works look back toward a heavier *stile antico* of an earlier period in music.

Like Zerafa, Francesco Azopardi also studied at the Sant' Onofrio in Naples. Born in 1748, he succeeded Zerafa in 1786 at St Paul's Cathedral in Mdina. After the French surrender, Azopardi combined holding the positions of *maestro di cappella* at the Mdina Cathedral and also at St John's in Valletta. I have provided many of the details of his career in Chapter Two of this thesis; however, there are some points that I would like to highlight about his music, and general musical styles and patterns in his sacred music. At the age of nineteen Azopardi graduated from the *Conservatorio*, but remained in Naples to continue his musical education and experience in the Neapolitan music world. Although a few secular compositions are known by Azopardi, or mentioned in the manuscript listing by Pullicino in his *Notizia Biografica*, his main output was in the field of sacred music.[32]

Azopardi composed over forty Masses and *pezzi staccati* from the Mass. His compositions in this genre began from 1768 to 1772, when he composed three Masses in Naples. He continued writing full scale Masses and a *Messa di Gloria* until 1806. His music is unfailingly charming, and there is often a pastoral element in the writing that must have been an influence on Isouard, especially in his earlier Parisian operas. The orchestration of these works, found in the Wignacourt Museum and the Cathedral Museum at Mdina, is generally for two pairs of oboes and horns, with strings and organ continuo, often with bassoons, though generally without violas. He introduces such instruments into these works as *flautini* (*Credo in pastorale*, Ms 693, Mdina), *traversieri* (*Missa de morti* in F minor, Ms 355, Mdina), *violetta* (in the *Qui Mariam* from the *Dies Irae*, Ms 698, Mdina) and in a *Kyrie* and *Gloria* in D dating from 1796 (Ms 360, Mdina). His largest scale work in this genre is a *Messa a due cori obligati* in F major and composed in the year 1798. The orchestration calls for pairs of oboes, horns, *clarini* and trumpets, together with two choirs. It is major score of 174 pages in length (Ms 361, Mdina). The inclusion of *flautini* in his *Credo in pastorale* reflects the

[32] Mdina Cathedral Archives (Miscellanea, Ms 255, ff. 42-43)

joyfulness of the season of Christ's birth, and his two *Missa Pastorale* in F, one of them found in the Wignacourt Museum are exquisite Christmas gems.[33]

There are some clear patterns in Azopardi's sacred works. The composer's extensive output includes a wide repertoire of sacred texts to music. Many of these were texts that were also set by Isouard, including predictable settings of the *Dixit Dominus, Te Deum,* the *Magnificat* (Azopardi composed four versions), *Nisi Dominus* and *Laudate Jerusalem.* Azopardi pays homage to the double feast of St Peter and St Paul, and to the Conversion and Commemoration of St Paul, in no less than fourteen works. Unlike Isouard, he composes works for Easter and for the processions associated with Holy Week and the Feast of *Corpus Christi.* However, he also includes a large number of works dedicated to the season of Christmas, as well as texts associated with St John the Baptist.[34] The main text to the saint, the offertory, *Inter natos mulierum*, composed by Mozart in 1771 (K72/74f), and which had previously been set to music by Josquin Des Prez, Cristóbal de Morales and Hans Leo Hassler, does not seem to appear in any holdings of Maltese archives. The six works set by Azopardi, to four texts for the Patron Saint of the Order of Malta, are quite unusual, in that the majority were mostly composed after the Order had been evicted by Napoleon in 1798. However, the reason becomes clear when one considers that they were also composed in the period after the French surrender in 1800, at the time when the composer was joint *maestro di cappella,* and responsible for the music in the liturgy of both Mdina Cathedral and St John's in Valletta.[35] These works include two settings of the hymn to the Baptist, *Ut queant laxis* (one undated, Ms 522 and the other, Ms 523 composed in 1787), two settings of *Justus ut palma florebit* (both dating from 1801, Ms 384 and 419), *Priusquam Te formarem* (Ms 385), and *In virtute tua, Domine*, (Ms 421, both dating from 1805). Both of these two final works are significant compositions - of thirty-five and thirty pages of full

[33] Wignacourt Museum, Mus Ms 35/1. This may be the work cited in the manuscript *Notizia Biografica* by P. Pullicino. It is unusual as there are deliberately only three voice lines in the work – alto, tenor and basso, (no soprano), and only single oboe and horn. It is more likely that the soprano part is missing.

[34] One of the few works found on Malta and associated with St John the Baptist, is the seventeenth-century allegorical *Quis est hic Johannes.* This is an anonymous 'Dialogue for three voices for the birth of St John the Baptist'. It is found in the Mdina Cathedral Museum, catalogued as Ms 187. No score survives but there are four manuscript part books.

[35] During the later period of the French occupation, and because of the allied siege of Valletta, Azopardi remained based in Mdina and Rabat. However, after that turbulent period, music at St John's continued under the *sostituto* direction of Azopardi's other pupil, Pietro Paolo Bugeja. This was confirmed to me by Dun Gwann Azzopardi in email correspondence (27 August 2012).

score, respectively. These first texts are for the Feast of the Nativity of St John the Baptist, celebrated on 24 June, which is one of the great feast days of the Order. *Ut queant laxis*, or the *Hymnus in Iaonnem*, is the first of three verses set in honour of the Baptist.[36] Written by Paulus Diaconus (Paul Warnefried 730-799AD), an eighth century Lombard historian, this Hymn to St John had been set by the composer Guido of Arezzo in the eleventh century, and is sung during Vespers.[37] The verse *Justus ut palma florebit* is taken from Psalm 92:12. Two versions of this work exist – Ms 384 for choir and orchestra and Ms 419 for solo soprano and orchestra. The latter work, for solo soprano is one of Azopardi's finest works, and one on which, he lavished great care and compositional skill. The Largo first movement is of extreme beauty, with running triplets in the three violin parts over bass *pizzicati*, with interweaving oboe and clarinet solos that flow around the vocal lines. Like Isouard's *Diffusa est gratia*, it is in a slow-fast format, but the final Allegro to the text *Tu Puer Propheta Altissimi* is compact and formal, and without any coloratura.[38] *Priusquam Te formarem* is an anonymous text utilised in the introit, offertory or communion parts, for the Feast of the Nativity of the Saint. The final work *In virtute tua, Domine* is the offertory from Psalm 20:2-3, and heard during the Mass for the Beheading of St John the Baptist, which is celebrated on 29 August. The Feasts of the Baptist were obligatory 'first class in all churches on Malta, and were celebrated with great solemnity also in Mdina Cathedral'.[39]

Azopardi's final dated works were three antiphons, an offertory to St Agatha (Ms 391) and a *Sacerdotes eius induam salutari* (Ms 386) composed for an anniversary of a bishop's election. The first antiphon, *Vade Anania*, for solo soprano and orchestra is the text of the antiphon on the *Magnificat* for Vespers for the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul the Apostle (1807). *Petrus Apostolus et Paulus Doctor gentium* and *Sacerdos et Pontifex*, both

[36] The other two verses are *Antra deserti*, sung at Matins, and *O nimis felix*, which is sung at Lauds. This work was originally composed by Azopardi to the text *Te Joseph celebrant*, for the Feast of St Joseph, and later the same music utilised to the Baptist text. There are significant changes to the vocal lines to accommodate the alternative text. It is catalogued as MS 521. Considering its connections with the Cathedral Chapter, Azopardi composed a fine score for the original work for the Feast of St Joseph. The text of *Ut queant laxis* was originally written as a hymn to the Baptist by Paolus Diaconus (c. 720-799). It was later set by the composer and music theorist Guido of Arezzo (also known as Arentius, c. 991-1033) who proposed the names of the first six tones in the scale (ut, re, mi, fa, so, la). The final tone was added at a later period. Claude V. Palisca, 'Guido of Arezzo', *The New Grove*

[37] Translated, the text means, 'So that your servant may, with loosened voices, resound the wonders of your deeds, absolve the guilt from our stained lips, Saint John'.

[38] Both versions of this 'Offertory' to St John the Baptist have been edited by Richard Divall. The text of the work for soprano solo (MS 419), is taken from Psalm 91, v. 13-14, and the Allegro from Psalm 111, v. 13.

[39] Dun Gwann Azzopardi. Email correspondence – 26 August 2012.

for choir and orchestra, were both written in 1808, the year before his death. The antiphon, *Sacerdos et Pontifex*, sung during the arrival of a new bishop, would have been composed for the arrival of Bishop Ferdinand Mattei (1761-1829), who had been appointed Bishop of Malta on 18 September 1807.[40] Finally, manuscript 386 in the Cathedral Museum, the *Sacerdotus eius induam Salutary,* and written in 1808, was obviously composed for the first anniversary of the installation of Bishop Mattei. To the end of his life and in service to sacred music Francesco Azopardi, in the words of William Byrd, truly *'fulfilled one's office'*.

3. Conclusions on Nicolò Isouard as a Composer of Sacred Music.

There are several observations that can be made on the sacred music by the young Nicolò Isouard. For the Order, and for the Maltese Church, music was a powerful tool in drawing the people to hear the essential message of Christ. The repetition of biblical texts of sacred music to the congregations of the time was also a strong manifestation in the support of religious dogma. Therefore, the composer who produced music for the liturgy on Malta was an important personality, and one to be nurtured. On examination of his sacred music, it is clear that Isouard continued a musical tradition that had been in existence on Malta for some time. In this respect there was little in his choice of sacred texts in support of the liturgy that was either evolutionary, or indeed revolutionary. Might I suggest that, at his young age, there was little plan in most of his compositions in this genre, other than assembling a portfolio of sacred works that would be used in support of his suitability and candidacy to be the next *maestro di cappella* of the Conventual Church of St John. He had good hopes to succeed to that position, especially considering the patronage and constant support that Grand Master Emmanuel de Rohan had bestowed on him. In this portfolio, Isouard generally adhered in his compositions to the ordinary of the Mass, and other works from principal feasts of the liturgical calendar, or works such as Sunday Vespers, settings that would receive frequent performance. Apart from the *Te Deum* of 1791, written shortly after his return to Malta from Revolutionary France and dedicated to an obvious patron in the person of Frà Paul-Julien Suffren de St Tropez, Isouard's music adheres to the existing

[40] Similarly, Benigno Zerafa also made a setting of this text, dated 1758. This would have been for the arrival of the new Bishop of Malta, Bartolome Rull (1691-1767), who was appointed on 19 December 1757. The score is in the Cathedral Museum, Mdina (Ms 322). An anonymous setting of the same text is in the Wignacourt Museum, and comes from the Archives of St Paul's Church in Rabat – catalogued as Anon. 108C/19.

tradition and proven formula that obviously pleased his employers, the Order of Malta and the Conventual Church of St John.

Some patterns and consistencies emerge in Isouard's use of key structure in his works. They are especially apparent when he utilises trumpets, or in favoured movements, especially the Kyrie from the Mass. The keys that the composer uses in these sacred works are as follows.

C major: *Virgam Virtutis Tuae. Virgam Virtutis* for solo tenor. *Credo* 1795. *Stabat Mater* (opening movement). *Qui tollis. Angelus Domini descendit.*

C minor: *Kyrie* Naples 1797. *Velum Templi* (*Motettini*).

D major: *Te Deum. Gloria à Quatro Voci* 1795. *Gloria in Re. Vexilla Regis. Nisi Dominus.*

E flat major: *Dixit legato. Kyrie* Mass no. 2. *Kyrie* in E flat. *Kyrie Leg* 1798. *Gratias agimus tibi* for alto. *Quoniam tu solus. Domine Deus quartetto. Diffusa est Gratia. O Vos Omnes (Motettini). Gloria Patri. Panis Angelicus. Virtute Magna. Juravit Dominus. Gloria a Patri a Tre.*

F major*: In Monte Oliveti* (*Motettini). Salve Regina*.

F minor: *De Torrente* for solo soprano.

G major: *Lauda Jerusalem*.

G minor: *Omnes amici miei (Motettini). Tristis est Anima (Motettini).*

B flat major: *Suscepimus Deus. Domine a Terzetto. Laetatus Sum. De Torrente* for solo soprano*. Magnificat. Dixit Dominus.*

In his use of key signatures, Isouard demonstrates a clear preference for the key of E flat major, in which he writes no less than fourteen movements. This includes three of the four settings of the *Kyrie*. Other keys such as E, A and B major he avoids, or does not use at all. Isouard obviously favours the bright key of D major for triumphal works or texts, and those employing *clarini* or trumpets. Two of his three *Gloria* are written in this key. C major is utilised for what I would call affirmative works that are solid in their textual message, whereas the key of B flat major, is employed to suit the tessitura of a solo singer, such as in the *De torrente*. The one large scale instance of his writing for solo voice in C major is the

Virgam Virtutis, for solo tenor, and this is precisely where Isouard uses the high tessitura of the solo tenor available at the time to full effect. Of the five Lenten *Motettini,* three are appropriately set in minor keys, namely C minor and G minor. But apart from the above observations, it is clear that Isouard has a distinctly favourite key, and that possibly due to his limited experience as a composer, he does not utilise any of the more remote keys, or minor keys.

It is interesting to compare his use of key structures in the one full score that survives of his early operas, namely *L'avviso ai maritati*, composed for Florence in 1794.[41] In this work, which is made up of an overture and seventeen distinct movements, Isouard only composes one piece in the minor key (A minor), and this is the *cavatina* for the *Contessa* which is number eleven in the score. The aria is interesting in being orchestrated for soprano and orchestra, together with solo violin and solo violoncello. In this opera the keys that are most written for are in B flat and E flat major, with the finales in D major and E flat major. Apart from D major in the overture, the finales and one duet for two basses, the sharp keys are generally avoided. The exceptions are one aria for the bass voice which is in E major, and two others in A major for soprano and tenor voices. I have deliberately excluded from this listing of key structures the two choral sacred works, the Mass of 1790 and the re-orchestration of the Jommelli Requiem that are in the appendix, and the purely instrumental Sinfonia.

Isouard's use of the chorus in his sacred music is competent if not predictable, although there are notable exceptions. These are the *Juravit Dominus*, which has great fugal and rhythmic detail, and also the choral movements in the larger works, especially the *Dixit Dominus,* and the two *Gloria's* in D major. Otherwise most choral movements are too short to allow for contrapuntal or fugal detail. Isouard is conservative in his writing for choral voices, and rarely extends beyond the limits of the respective voices in sections that are obviously choral in nature. He is far less contrapuntal in his approach to choral writing than the baroque imbued Zerafa. By contrast, Isouard's choral movements are products of their time, tending toward a neo-classical simplicity, and are often of a pastoral nature. In this he is possibly reflecting the influence of his teacher Azopardi who often composed in this vein.

[41] See Catalogue of Stage Works in the Appendix. The full score and parts are to be found in D-DI/Mus. 4323-F-506. Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats – und Universitätsbibliothek, Dresden.

Of course this observation does not apply to works for solo voice, or where solo voices are employed within larger works. Here he utilises the range and the technical expertise of the voices to the full, having an intimate knowledge of the voices that he was writing for from practical performing experience in the Conventual Church.

In all of the sacred works by Isouard, there is not one instance of an indication of organ registration or stops – only the instructions of *organo aperto* and *organo chiuso*, used for reasons of dynamics, and occasionally the terms *senza organo* and *con organo*. This practice of not notating organ registrations in the score follows the compositional practices of both Girolamo Abos and Francesco Azopardi. In Abos' Mass in G major, found in the Majella Library in Naples, the composer is fastidious in his clear indications for the organ. But again, there is not one instruction concerning actual organ registration in this score, or in other works that I have examined by Abos.[42] Was this the usual convention on the part of an obviously experienced organ player, as Isouard undoubtedly was? Or rather, was it simply that the composer of this period allowed the experienced organists of the time, to have the freedom to choose their own tonal preferences? This would be a sensible practice, especially on organs in Southern Italian and Maltese churches, which were often restricted in the numbers of stops available on the instruments.

In his use of the orchestra in his sacred works, Isouard generally fashioned the orchestration to adhere to the personnel on the roster of salaried instrumentalists who were based in the Conventual Church. However, in the *Te Deum* of 1791, and in some of his later sacred compositions, he calls on pairs of clarinets, and on one isolated occasion, a harp. Isouard had already written extensively for the clarinet in 1794, in his second opera *L'avviso ai maritati*. We have no record of clarinet's being used on Malta in the church during the period, although by the 1790's, even on Malta, the instrument would have been coming into vogue, possibly as a participant in house chamber music, but especially and essentially in use in the repertoire of the Manoel Theatre. But even though he worked within the restrictions of Malta of the period, Isouard's works for the church have a purposeful strength, and also a neo-classical austerity that became a musical trademark of the period, especially paralleled in the development of music in France.

[42] Girolamo Abos. *Messa à 4 Strumenti* in G major. I-Nc, Majella. MS.Rel. 8

In this study it is essential that one addresses the question, was Nicolò Isouard religious by nature? There is nothing to indicate it, and he had no tendencies *'to fulfil one's office'* as mentioned by William Byrd. Abos, Jommelli and Azopardi were deeply religious, whilst Isouard's compatriots, Vella and Zerafa were priests. Isouard displays no leaning toward a spiritual nature, and there are no references to his religion or faith in any letters or references of the period. His mention before the Inquisition on Malta is a clear indication that he was considered suspect in his religious faith, and his leanings toward Freemasonry and his own Jacobin sympathies are symptoms that he was in fact irreligious. It should be noted that Isouard composed only one work for Corpus Christi *(Panis Angelicus),* or for those liturgical occasions specifically related to the Eucharist. His accusation to the Inquisition states that he is a person having no faith, and in fact Isouard actually denied the 'real presence' in the Eucharist. The composer was simply trying to obtain a living in the only way available to him on Malta, a country governed by a religious order. Curiously, for an artist wanting to ingratiate himself into the Order's employment, he composed no works with references or associations with the Patron Saint of the Order, St John the Baptist. His sole mention of the saint is in the dedication '*Pour St Jean'* on the title page of the *Magnificat*. It comes as no surprise that Isouard essentially composed no original sacred music after his flight from Malta to France in September 1800, and it is significant that he chose to contract a civil union with his wife Claudine in January 1812, in preference to a marriage solemnised by the Church.

I would like to address one final question, and that is, who was the real Isouard? It is not easy to provide a definitive answer. Clearly he was gracious and ingratiating as a man and artist, and was a person who would utilise his charm when he needed to obtain a favour or position. Considering the time and social milieu that was Malta in the later eighteenth-century, he was certainly born there into an unusual, unorthodox and forward-thinking family. He was witness in France to the political upheavals of the French Revolution and later with the Napoleonic period. And in his youth he experienced that cultural transformation, where the modern artist that emerged from the collapse of the *Ancien Regime* was a completely different personality to the court musician of the previous period. His sacred music, although mostly composed when he was a very young man, has a distinct personal individuality in it, that bears the style and the imprint of a composer who was

moving with the current musical mores of the period. It was an unusual and transitional period in musical history, and other composers such as Cherubini, Gossec, Le Sueur and even the young Beethoven, grasped at the opportunities that offered themselves to a composer and musician of the 'new age'. It was the period that begot the personal cult of the painter, the writer and poet, the architect and especially the composer. As political and ecclesiastical masters changed with a dizzying rapidity, so styles in the period changed in both music and libretto. The opportunities inherent in these changes were grasped by the young Isouard, who departed his homeland and the rule of the Order and their aristocratic knights, to begin a new and inspirational artistic career in a field where he was so obviously at home – that is the world of opera and theatre.

Two intriguing questions remain unanswered on the subject of Maltese sacred music. The first is - what became of the music in the Conventual Church? Dun Gwann Azzopardi suggests that the survival of music in the Mdina Cathedral was due to the Diocese of Malta employing Maltese composers. Their manuscripts were obtained from the family heirs, or were held in family archives on Malta, or what is termed a *capella a musica.*[43] In the volume 'The Nani Composers', and on the question of these *capella di musica,* the historian Joseph Vella Bondin provides a clear explanation of the development of these family collections of music that were a feature on Malta. Consider that the Conventual Church has very few music manuscripts surviving from the two hundred year period. There are a few works from Mdina surviving by Balzano, and none from the time of Michel Angelo Falusi's time on Malta at St John's.[44] Concerning this music of the Conventual Church, Dun Gwann suggests that, as most of the directors of music employed there were foreign born, such as Melchiore Sammartin, then their music may have been taken back to Italy by the family.[45] One indication of this is the fact that there is only one manuscript of Vincenzo Anfossi present on

[43] Joseph Vella Bondin, 'The Nani Musicians, their Music and their Capella di Musica' in *The Nani Composers (XVII-XX cent) A Historical Assessment of their Works* (Malta: Hill Monastic Manuscript Library in collaboration with the Cathedral Museum, Mdina, 2007), 19-21. This study also contains contributions from Dun Gwann Azzopardi on the Nani Family, and by Franco Bruni – a Catalogue of the Nani manuscripts.

[44] As mentioned in Chapter One, there is the intriguing mention of a box of Falusi's personal effects being in the Franciscan House in Valletta, but it has long since vanished.

[45] I have been unsuccessful in locating any manuscripts by the two composers Sammartin.

Malta, held in a private collection on Gozo, whilst many works are located in Italian and French Archives.[46]

The second question that must be addressed is why are there no sets of printed music from St John's? Is it possible that at some time, they were incorporated into the holdings of St Paul's Cathedral in Mdina? It is a matter of regret that despite the architectural and artistic glories of the Conventual Church, the music played there in support of the liturgy during the time of the Knights, appears simply to have not survived. Perhaps as General Vaubois ordered, the music from the Church and the Manoel Theatre was used as wadding in the cannons of the Republican Army, at the time besieged in the three cities of Valletta, Birgu and Senglea. Only the fortuitous decision of the fleeing republican, Citizen Isouard, to take his own sacred music manuscripts to France, ensured their survival. One can only hope that further manuscripts or excerpts from Isouard's lost Maltese operas will one day appear.[47]

The intention of this study of Isouard's life before 1800, his compositions for the church, and the Maltese society that he was part of, has been to provide a clearer explanation about his reasons for writing sacred music in the earlier part of his career. There is no doubt, that the period of time spent in the employ of The Order of Malta was beneficial to both the Church and the Order, and to him. Due to this employment he had regular association with professional singers and musicians, and the opportunity for working in music on a daily basis. It was a crucial formative experience that was to serve him well in his future career, as a highly successful composer of many works for the Parisian stage. The appearance of Napoleon Bonaparte, in this case on Malta, changed Isouard's life forever, as well as the lives of many people and nations throughout all of Europe. Isouard departed for France, and just in time. Soon after these Napoleonic incursions, the subsequent defeat of the French in the Mediterranean, and the Treaty of Amiens swept Malta out of the French influence that had hitherto existed in diplomatic and commercial terms, and into the English sphere of influence. French commerce and influence wilted and died, whilst emotional links with the Kingdom of Naples and commercial links with Great Britain became paramount.

[46] The writer has traced thirty works by Vincenzo Anfossi. These include a set of three organ sonatas, held in the Seminary Library in Lucca (Seminario Vescovile, I-Ls), which, although catalogued as being by him, are in fact one single sonata dating from the 1830's.

[47] These stage works are all listed in the 'Catalogue of Isouard's Operas', in the appendix.

I hope that my observations on the career and music of the young Isouard will encourage other writers to address the need for a definitive biography of this composer, and especially a study of his numerous stage works.[48]

[48] Addendum. After the successful examination process of this thesis I discovered that one of Isouard's operas had been staged on Malta. That was his *Jeannot et Colin*, number forty-one in the Catalogue of his Stage Works. It was staged at the Manoel Theatre in Valletta on the first and second of June 1991, and conducted by Maestro Joseph Vella. These details have been added to the Catalogue.

Editorial Notes to the Music Editions.

1. General Notes.

The following observations should be taken as generally applying to this complete edition of the Sacred Music composed by Nicolò Isouard. I have deliberately kept these editorial notes simple and self-explanatory, to facilitate immediate comprehension of the passage under discussion.

Much of Isouard's manuscript notation of the music scores and the hand written sacred texts are not of the clearest quality. Some sections are difficult to decipher, and often the composer resorts to the music 'shorthand notation' of the period. Familiarity with the Isouard's composition style and his handwriting facilitated the editorial process.

Editorial suggestions in the music text concerning dynamics are placed in parenthesis, and editorial slurs are shown as draft rather than block slurs. Isouard rarely, if ever uses slurs on the vocal lines - therefore all of the slurs in the vocal parts of the scores are editorial.

Dynamics often tend to be marked only in the *violini* parts or the *bassi* parts. Occasionally woodwind and horn parts may have their own marked dynamics and additionally often have the notation *soli* or *solo*. In some sections of the works, the paucity of dynamic markings will have to be taken into account by the conductor or performer, and adjusted accordingly within a rehearsal context.

A small number of instruments have been added and marked [ad libitum]. This is done in accordance with the usual practice in the late eighteenth century, such as adding one or two bassoons to the bass line when woodwind instruments are playing. This process has been based on resources from the rostered list of instrumentalists employed in the Conventual Church of St John in Valletta. If the bassoon part is not in the Isouard manuscript, then it is realised [ad libitum] in accordance with these practices, generally only playing when the other woodwinds or horns are playing.

An organ continuo part has been realised for every work except the *Missa Defunctorum*, although players should not feel restricted to using that version. In some works, where Isouard writes repeated semiquavers or sometimes quavers in the bass line, the editor will simplify the notation for the organ by the substitution of either minims or semibreves. This normal performance practice of the period will be obvious from the score, and to any experienced organist, and will be dealt with in these notes. Apart from the directions *organo aperto* or *organo chiuso* there are no specific directions relating to organ registration in any of the works.

Latin Texts.

Occasionally Isouard will make small differences in the actual spelling of the Latin texts, due to traditional usage of Latin in the late 18th century on Malta. In the music settings I have followed the spelling as used by Isouard in his manuscripts, although generally clarifying

divergences from the normal Latin texts, and any changes that I have made, in the editorial notes of each work.

The condition of all of the manuscripts held at the Bibliothèque Nationale is very good and only one work is damaged - requiring some reconstruction: that being the *Te Deum* of 1791. The digitisation of the manuscript of the later *Missa Defunctorum* made the realisation a difficult process, but one accomplished with common sense and an understanding of Isouard's distinctive composition style.

From Australia, I have been unable to examine the watermarks on the manuscript paper, but as with similar papers used on Malta in the period, they are probably of Neapolitan or French provenance.

In these editorial notes, the works will be listed in alphabetical order.

2. Editorial Notes.

Angelus Domini.

There are only a few notes about this short work of 73 bars.

Bars 8 and 9. Isouard uses minims and semibreves to show the lower voicings in the violin I triple stopping.
In the final bar the notes for the two oboes and the two horns are crochets. I have not edited these as minims, so as to be the same length as the rest of the ensemble. But this difference should be borne in mind by the performer.

Credo Leg.à 4 Voci in Do. 1795.

The manuscript score of this work is very clear, except where Isouard suddenly places instruments out of order on the page.

Bars 9-11. The soprano and alto solo lines from these three bars were commenced on the correct staves, but are erased and alternative vocal lines added for these voices to the tenor and bass vocal lines.
Bars 24-26. Violin II. Isouard uses notational shorthand, but it is ambiguous as to whether he means that the quaver and two semiquaver sequence is repeated in that same pattern, or that the rest of the passage is all semiquavers. That is why there are alternatives in the 1st and 2nd voice on that section of the part.
Bar 45. Soprano I. Notes one and two could be read as A when they are obviously B.
Bar 65. It is unclear whether the violas are col basso in this bar; so I have added them in parenthesis.
Bar 121. Note 4 goes out of range of cello and contrabass.
Bar 307 has a *dal segno* or repeat sign at the beginning of the bar, but no other indication follows in the score. Thus it is rendered surplus to requirements.

Bar 356 exists in two version; the first is erased and replaced with the bar that follows in the score. As Isouard has neglected to add the final notes of the choir, these have been added in the appropriate place.

De torrente in A flat major.

Bar 280. There is a vocal *ossia*. The upper note is written in the ms as a top C but it is obviously a top A flat.
In the Bassoon (ad libitum) part, passages of repeated semiquavers in the 3/8 should be played by the performer as dotted crochets, (e.g. bars 274-5).

De torrente in B flat major.

Bar 5. The natural on the B is very clear in the manuscript, although it might sound unconvincing. However in bar 21, this same phrase is repeated and without the natural in front of the B.
Bars 5-7. The organ bass notes have been editorially changed to a dotted crochet for obvious reasons. Also bars 42-3 and 46-7.
Bar 24. The soprano soloists could add an appoggiatura to conform to the notation in both the violins and the clarinets.
Bar 54. The solo clarinet line is written both on its own stave and also as a voice one on the violin I line, for three bars.
Bar 57. Note three has been changed from a D to a C.

Diffusa est Gratia.

Bar 10. Vln II; an ink blot covers part of the note but it is readable as a D.
Bar 69 is marked *pizz* in the manuscript, but one bar later in bars 77, 113 and 120. Therefore the first pizzicato indication has been put back by one bar to bar 70 for obvious performance reasons.
Bar 114. Semibreves (written A flat and F) were originally written for Clarinet I and II, but inked out by the composer.
Bar 151. The dynamics in the ms are ambiguous: p *stacc* for violins, f for clarinets and mf for bassi.

Dixit Dominus à 4.

Even by Isouard's standards, this manuscript is fairly clear and free from errors. However there are some points to note.
Movement I. Bar 110. Isouard begins to write the flute *colla voce* with oboe I but erases the bar in ink.
I/bar 158. Tenor line. 2 minims changed to 1 minim and 2 crochets.
I/bar 159 Cor II, note 1 is F in ms.
I/bar 176. The *bassi* and viola note is obviously D but possibly could be an E flat.
Movement II. Isouard originally started the Oboe solo in bar 1 but erases it and places it in bar 2.

II/bar 19-23. The end of the flute solo and the opening two bars of hte oboes share the same stave.
Movement III. Isouard gives no indications when the obvious soprano solo becomes choral tutti and reverse.
Movement V. Violin I is written a tone above the tenor line.
V/bar 43. The same.
V/bar 50. Bassi part marked forte and not p.
V/bar 68. Vln I note 1 C corrected to E.
Movement VI. Bar 1. Vln I Semibreve A in second voice below upper phrase.
Movement VII. Alto voice marked in alto clef, but thereafter written in soprano clef throughout.
VII/ bar 6 Vln II. 4th beat missing.
Movement VIII. Bar 93. Tenor semibreve written G in the ms and not F.

Dixit Dominus Legato.

Bar 128. Bass voice line is written as printed; one third below the *bassi* line.
Bar 142. Vln II. Notes B D changed to C E.
Bar 184-196. The *tutti bassi* line divides with Cb remaining in a crochet pattern and the Vc playing quaver passages an octave above. The semibreve in these bars I suggest refers to an organ low pedal.
Bar 197. There appears to be a strange forward looking repeat sign on three staves but its purpose is unknown.

Dominus Deus a Terzetto in B flat major.

Bars 4-9. The solo oboe part is also written on the violin I line, as though as a guide for a violin conductor score, as often used in the early 19th century.
Bar 68. Notes 2-4 are covered by ink blot.
Bar 107. Note 1 originally a crochet; change to two quavers for the text.
Bar 130. Bassi note E in the ms (corrected to F).

Domine Deus – Quartetto in E flat major.

Sections of the manuscript are very unclear.
Bar 14. Vln I. Note two is E, B and G in the ms (changed to D, B and F).

Gloria in Re.

The score is fairly clear, although Isouard's ink blots appear with regularity throughout the score.
Bar 63 . The Oboe I and II minims have been editorially added as the notation is hidden under a mass of ink. As Flute I and II are unison with the oboes, the same procedure has been applied to their parts.
Bar 80. The pauses are missing on all 4 of the vocal lines.

The re-entry of the orchestra score for the *Cum Sancto Spiritu* is marked with a large #.
As noted in the entry on the *Gloria in Re* in the main body of the text, Isouard forgets to add the trumpet bars from bar 303 to the end of the movement. These have been reconstructed in the score by the simple expedient, possibly wanted by the composer, of making the trumpet parts unison with horns I and II.

Gratia agimus tibi in E flat major for solo contralto.

There are no notes.

Gloria Patri in E flat major for solo soprano.

Bar 4. Bassi. Note 1 A in ms (corrected to B).
Bar 27. Clar I. Note 1. C sharp, not natural. Note 5. C natural, not flat. This confusion is caused by Isouard using the key signature of two flats and not the correct key in one flat.
Bar 31. Notes 1-6 B.D.F.B.D.F.

Kyrie Eleison in E flat major.

Bar 27. Tenor note 1 changed from crochet to minim.
Bar 47. Basso line, note 1 is first written A flat at the top of the stave and then seemingly changed to the bottom of the stave.

Kyrie in C minor.

Bar 3. Bassi. Illegible ink notation of either pizzicato, unusual in the circumstances, or p assai.
Bar 25. Oboe I. Quaver undotted in the ms.
Bar 55. Tenor note 3 changed from D to C.
Bar 70. Horn I and II. Note 3 changed from C to B.
Bar 92. Alto note 1 changed from A to G.
Bar 92. Tenor note 1 changed from F to E.
Bar 102. Tenor note 1 changed from E to E flat.
Bar 165. Alto note 1 changed from C to D.

Kyrie Messa No. 2 in E flat major. – Fragment.

Bar 29. Tenor line, note 1. F changed to E flat.

Juravit Dominus.

The score is fairly clear though ‘scrappily’ written, making a transcription of the actual score itself a detailed exercise.

In bar 111 one of Isouard’s characteristic ink blots obscures the alto and tenor vocal lines, but this has been easily reconstructed by following the oboe and clarinet lines, which at that moment are in unison with the voices.

Bar 123. The word *non* is missing from the alto, tenor and bass line.

Lauda Jerusalem.

Bar 2. Soprano 2. There are two lines of notation, one in soprano clef and the other, the same pitch equivalent in alto clef, and on the same line, for six bars.
This also occurs in bars 44-55.
Bars 16-22. Violin II is simply noted by the figure *3*, meaning in Isouard's musical shorthand, to be played one third down.
Bar 19. Soprano I and II have no appoggiatura as in the violin lines.
Bar 64. Violin II. Note 1 changed from D to E flat.
Bar 66. Violin I. It is possible that Isouard has omitted to add the stems for demisemiquavers.
Bars 86-89. Violin II is marked 8, meaning an octave lower than Violin I.
Bars 133-140. Violin I and II are marked *Come da capo*, meaning to use the equivalent violin line passage from bars 2-7.

Laetatus sum.

Bar 4-6. I have retained the traditional Latin spelling of *Laetatus* rather than Isouard's colloquial *Letatus*.

Magnificat.

The score is fairly accurate, although on occasion Isouard will with a 'Gallic flourish' sometimes place notes in ambiguous positions on the stave, either above or immediately below the desired and obvious note.

There are very few indications of the term solo or tutti in the work, although Basso Solo is used in bar 159 for the entry of the solo bass in the aria *Fecit potentiam*.

In his setting of the word *anima mea Dominum*, Isouard uses a small *'d'* on the *Dominum*. I have used the capital D as in the normal Latin usage in this Canticle.
Bar 37. Bass chorus. 2 crochet instead of one.
Bar 154. Isouard omits the change of key signature.
Bar 193 and 218 note 1 in the bass voice is G and not F.
Bar 346. Alto voice. Two minims in the ms, and not a dotted minim and crochet.
Bar 354. Soprano notation in minim and crochet and crochet rest which does not fit the word *Abraham*.
Bar 444. Violin 2. Note 1 minim and not quavers.

Missa à Quattro Voci 1790 (The Cospicua Mass)

Kyrie I
Bar 35. Violas. D and C in ms (corrected to D and B).
Bar 47. Voice lines. The opening text is in the Greek,'*Cherie eleison'* in ms. (Corrected to *Kyrie eleison*).

Christe
Bar 157-167. Violas are one bar too early, and the seventh bar has been deleted to place the entire phrase in the correct position.
Kyrie II
Bar 211. Vln 1. Note 4 CEG in ms. (corrected to BDG).
Bar 232. Tenor. Beat one is a dotted minim, without any text – an obvious mistake (deleted).
Bar 276. Cor I-II. 2nd note on 4th beat in ms (corrected to 3rd beat).
Gloria
Bar 23. Tenor. Note 4 is C in ms (corrected to D).
Bar 68. Vln I-II. Not dotted in ms.
Laudamus Te
Bar 107. Vln 2, note 3 is A in ms (corrected to C).
Bar 164. Vln 1. 2nd beat of 4 semiquavers is omitted.
Domine Deus
Bar 2. Vla, note 2 is D and B in ms (corrected to D and C).
Bar 12. The same.
Bar 22. Soprano dotted quaver, semiquaver and quaver in ms (corrected to dotted semiquaver, demisemiquaver, quaver).
Qui Tollis
Bar 12. Vln 2, note 2 is E in ms (corrected to D).
Bar 42. Cor 2, note 4 is D in ms (corrected to C).
Quoniam
Bar 170. Vla notes 2 and 3 are B and A in ms (corrected to A and B).
Cum Sancto – Amen
Bar 1, original time signature is *alla breve*, but due to music programme restriction has been changed to 8/8 (alla breve).
Bar 109. Cor I-II, note 1 is D and G in ms (corrected to C and E).
Bar 154. Vc/CB/Org is minim, crochet, crochet (corrected to minim, dotted crochet, and quaver).

Missa Pro Defunctorum. Jommelli – Isouard re-orchestrated.

Kyrie I
Bar 2. 2nd violin B and G in ms. (Changed to B and G).
Bar 20. Alto clef is missing from the trombone line. (Retained in bass clef in the edition).
Bar 26. The bass clef is reintroduced on the trombone line.
Bar 26. Trombone 2. Note 1 is accidentally written in alto clef.
Dies Irae
Bar 19. Vc/Cb Note 5 is G in ms and not F.
Bar 303-305. Flute parts are off the top of the page (reconstructed).
Bar 307. Bassoon, tenor clef missing.
Pie Jesu
Bar 17. Viola semibreve is written as B and not C.
Agnus Dei
Bar 180. Flute 1. G in ms, not F.

Nisi Dominus.

Bar 3. The composer's original intentions were to have the first note of a minim followed by a crochet but he has scratched this out with ink and retained the version as printed.
Bar 157-158. Vln 1 is unclear due to a large ink blot covering most of the notes.
The two bars have been reconstructed based on the following two bars.
Bars 160 and 164 shows Isouard's only use in his sacred music of minim appoggiaturas.
Bars 161-162. Isouard originally writes the text *Gloria Patri,* but deletes this and replaces it with *Patri et Filio*.

Panis Angelicus.

Bar 19. Vln 2. Note 3 F.
Bar 74. Bass. Original notation 2 quavers and 1 crochet.
Bar 109. Bassi. Note 2 F.
Bar 161. Tenor. Note 2 quaver.
Bar 176. Bassi and Horns are semibreves. Oboes, Violins are minims.

Qui Tollis.

Bar 42. Oboe 2, note 1. Quaver.
Bar 92. Horn 1 and 2, note 1. D.
Bar 102. A *Dal segno* sign is at the beginning of the bar.
Bar 168. Another *Dal segno* sign, possibly for the copyist.
Bar 235. Violin 2. Note 4 F.

Quoniam Tu Solus

Bar 6. Oboes I and 2. The turns, as in most case where Isouard writes these on instrumental lines in a form of musical shorthand, are difficult to decipher.
Bar 61. Bass. Original rhythm is a double dotted crochet, quaver and crochet.
Bar 87. Violin I and II. Note 2, dynamic of p in ms.
Bar 104. Bassi line is illegible, and reconstructed from the figured bass.
Bar 105. Bass. The grace notes are very unclear.

Salve Regina.

Bars 17-20 have been pasted over an earlier version of those four bars.
Bar 28 is also pasted over by blank paper and replaced by the ensuing visible bar.
Bar 43. Alto. There seems to be the figures 18 written over the voice stave, the meaning of which I do not understand.
Bar 49. Bassi. Originally D naturally but with the D flat in the violin I line.
Bar 63. Violins I - II, note 5 is a crochet on the pause. Bassi, note 5 is a quaver on the pause.

Sinfonia in C Minor.

The work is complicated because a full orchestral score of the work is missing, and the orchestral part for the second oboe has not survived, nor parts for *'due Viole'* mentioned on the first Bassi cover page.

There are only minor mistakes in the copying of the two surviving Violin I parts and the two Bassi parts.

Stabat Mater. - Five fragments.

Stabat Mater.
Quae moerebat.
Quis est homo.
Pro peccatis suae gentis
Quando corpus morietur.

Stabat Mater.
There is no tempo direction.
Bar 6 and 11-12. Organ part changed from semiquavers to minim.
Bar 26. 8vb over the violin parts. Accordingly Violin I and I transposed down by one octave, until the 'loco' direction in bars 38 and again in 41.

Quae moerebat.
There is no key signature, nor tempo direction.
Bar 1. Violins I and II transposed down one tone.
Bars 1-4. Organ bass line editorially changed to crochets.

Quis est homo.
There is no tempo direction.

Pro peccatis.
Bars 18-21. *Ossia* for bass solo in octaves.
Bars 27-33 have been erased in the MS and rewritten on the bottom stave.

Quando corpus.
There is no tempo direction.
A *'dal segno'* is written over the pause in bar 31, giving the impression that the repeat restarts at the beginning of the double bar (bar 22). This has been included in full in the edition.

Suscepimus Deus.

Bars 29 and 31. Isouard sets the spelling of the word *terrae* as *terre*.
Bar 39. Violin 2. Notes 8. Isouard omits the sextuplet marking.

Te Deum.

Because of the damaged condition of the manuscript, I would refer the reader to the commentary in the section entitled Listings and Observations. The brief passages, sometimes only of a couple of notes or half bars, where reconstruction has been necessary are fully indicated in parentheses.

Occasionally the organ line will appear on a different stave to the general bassi line, as for example in bars 11-19. For repeated phrases in a single bar, or notation covering one or two beats, Isouard uses the usual shorthand repeat signs utilised in the period.
One point should be made concerning the violin II pizzicato line that begins on bar 155. Isouard seems to indicate that this instrument should be played one third below the first violins. This direction is very unclear in the manuscript, although the resulting notes fit with the surrounding musical text.

Bar 261. Isouard mistakenly reverses the first and second violin lines for one bar.
Bar 276. Cello. Note 1 originally quaver.
Bar 316. Bass. Added quaver before notes 4 and 5 to fit text.
Bar 377, the Bassi line reads crochet, a quaver rest followed by four demisemiquavers resolving on a crochet. This places the bass line one beat out with the violins and has been corrected.
Bar 417. The notation in the bass line is the opposite of the following passage in bar 419 and has been editorially corrected.
Bar 460. Note 4 in the solo tenor line has been added, to allow for the full text to be sung with the soprano I.
Bar 496. Alternative text is written of either *Miserere, misere.....*or the more correct *Miserere Domine.*
Bars 500-504. Isouard writes the text *misericordiam tuam* and not *misericordia*.

Vexilla Regis.

Bar 8. Tutti Bassi, note 4, D to F.
Bar 24. Text *vita*.
Bar 26. Text. *Vitam*. Isouard confuses the endings of the word.
Bar 33. Sop, note 3. D to C.
Bar 34. Bass. Isouard erases minim on beat 3.
Bar 34. Sop. Isouard included 3 notes but with no text. Not included in edition.
Bar 40. Bass. Text. Isouard uses *mortem* and not *morte*.
Bar 52. Oboes I and II. Notes 4-6. Isouard reverses rhythm and writes as crochet, quaver, quaver and not quaver, quaver and crochet.
Bar 74-5. Sop. Isouard erases notes on soprano stave, and adds them to one line above.

Virgam Virtutis Tuae for Tenor and Bass Duet.

Bar 118-121. Bass. There is an *ossia* passage on a stave below the vocal line, and written lower for the bass voice over these four bars.
Bars 125-128. The same.

Virgam Virtutis Tuae for solo Tenor.

Some bars are unclear due to Isouard erasing some notes and occasional ink blots, but otherwise the manuscript is clear.

Virtute Magna.

Bar 13. Alto note 1. A in ms.
Bar 22. Sop. Note 2 and 3. F in ms
Bar 22. Bass. Note 2. D in ms.
Bar 23. Cor I. Note 2. C in ms.
Bar 54. Ten. Dotted minim in ms.
Bar 70. Vln I. Notes 4-6 G's in ms.
Bar 83. Bass. Note 1 minim. Note 2 quaver in ms.
Bar 75. Oboes, sop and alt. Printed rhythm as in ms.

Nicolò Isouard – Catalogue of Stage Works.

Most of the sources for the works in this catalogue, composed after 1800 are to be found in the holdings of the Musée de L'Opéra, in the Salle Garnier, as part of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. The earlier works are known from Paul Xuereb's History of the Manoel Theatre, and from the volume edited by Can. John Azzopardi entitled *Nicolò Isouard de Malte*.[1] Many details of the first performances in various countries, and translations are to be found in Loewenberg's *Annals of Opera*.[2] Basic information has been checked against the incomplete catalogues in *The New Groves* and *MGG*. Details of the manuscript locations and catalogue numbers in many libraries are available on http://www.rism.info/en/. Details of casting of the Italian operas, numbers one and two in this catalogue are available on the Italian Union catalogue found at www.internetculturale. Printed editions of the works starting from catalogue number eleven, and their locations and catalogue information are available from: http://www.rism.info/en/publications.html. Many of the printed full scores are to be found in the collection of the Archives de la Ville de Bruxelles, digitised as a collaboration with the Brigham Young University, and found under the composer's name on the site http://www.Archive.org.

Opera and *Opéra-comiques*

1.

Casaciello, perseguitato da un mago

Opera, Italian, One Act
Libretto: possibly by Frà Charles de Saint Priest, or by (Frà) François Emmanuel Guignard, Comte de Saint-Priest
Premiere. January 1793 possibly Teatro Manoel, Malta

Cast.
Casaciello – Sig. Filippo Casaccia[3]
La Nina – Signa. Teresina Motta
Il Mago – Sig. Vincenzo Guida

Libretto: Archives of the Cathedral Museum, Mdina, Malta.
Two copies of the Libretto, printed on Malta survive.[4] One is in Italian, and the other in French has minor differences.[5]

2.

[1] Paul Xuereb, *The Manoel Theatre – a short history* (Malta: Friends of the Manoel Theatre, PEG Ltd, 1994, 2nd edition 2011). and Can. John Azzopardi, *NIcolò Isouard de Malte* (Mdina, Malta: The Friends of the Cathedral Museum, 1991), cited *as Azzopardi*.
[2] Alfred Loewenberg, *Annals of Opera 1597-1940* (London: John Calder, 1978).
[3] The character of the Neapolitan comedian Casacciello also appears in Isouard's opera Cimarosa, which is number thirty in this catalogue.
[4] Libretti in both French and Italian. Wignacourt Museum, Rabat, Malta.
[5] The work is not listed in *The New Groves*.

L'avviso ai maritati

Opera, Italian, Two Acts – Dramma Giocoso per Musica
Libretto: Francesco Gonella De Ferrari [17..-1812]
Premiere, Florence, Regio Teatro di Via della Pergola, 4 June 1794.[6] *(sotto la protez. Dell' A.R. di Ferdinando III. Arciduca d'Austria, Principe Reale d'Ungheria e di Boemia, Gran-Duca di Toscano etc).*[7]
Performed in Lisbon 1794, Bologna, Teatro Zagnoni (Autumn) 1795,[8] Turin Teatro S. A. S. Il Principe di Carignano 1795, Dresden Carnival 31 January 1795 and Madrid, 2 August 1795, Lisbon, Real Teatro di San Carlos 1796.[9] It was premiered on 18 August at the Teatro Publico in Lucca.[10]

Cast.
Contessa Lindora – Anna Benini
Colonnello Ernesti – Vincenzo Aliprandi
D(on). Filippone – Fausto Borselli
D(on). Placenzio – Laurenzo Cipriani
Volpino – Filippo Senesi
D(onna). Eugenia – Marianna Moltz
Dorina – Maria Veccelli

The work was performed in Florence together with the ballet *La Villanella Astuta*, composed and choreographed by Cosimo Morelli. The orchestration of this work is for two flutes, oboes, clarinets, horns, and trumpets, together with timpani and strings. A cembalo is used for the secco recitatives, and no bassoons are mentioned in the full score.

Sources: Composer's MS. Paris Conservatoire National de Musique.
Full scores. Florence. Conservatorio di Musica Luigi Cherubini (D.I.318-9).
Bologna. Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale.
D-DI/Mus. 4323-F-506. Scores and parts. Sächsische-Landesbibliothek – Staats – und Universitätsbibliothek, Dresden. Orchestra – 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bassoon, two horns, two trumpets and timpani. Continuo-not known.
Ho perduto il moi contento
D-DI/Mus. 4323-1.1. Sächsische- Landesbibliothek – Staats – und Universitätsbibliothek, Dresden
Giunge Imene, e la Sposetta. Quintetto. Biblioteca Academia di S. Cecilia, Rome. G-Mss-845. Orchestra – 2 oboes, 1 clarinet, 2 horns strings.

[6] Libretto – Firenze 1794, Biblioteca Liceo Musicale di Bologna. Lo. 2546.
[7] www.Internetculturale. OPAC SBN – Istituto central per il catalogo unico.
[8] Libretto – Bologna 1795, Biblioteca Liceo Musicale di Bologna. Lo. 2547.
[9] Libretto – Lisbon 1796, Biblioteca Fondazzioni Giorgio Cini, Venezia. VE 0239 Rolandi.
[10] Libretto – Lucca 1798, Biblioteca Statale, Lucca.

Nò che à si Crude Pene. Biblioteca Conservatorio di Giuseppe Verdi, Milan. Ms. Tr. Ms. 580
Colonello's aria *Ma che vedo l'ora*.
B-Bc/4442. RISM ID No. 703002033.
Overture Edition Richard Divall

3.

Artaserse

Opera seria, Italian, 3 Acts
Libretto: Abate Pietro Metastasio with additional verses.
Première. Livorno, Teatro degli Avvalorati, Autumn 30 August 1794

Cast.
Artaserse – Salvatore Tiezzi, sopranist
Arbace/Meglacle - Andrea Martini (Senesino), sopranist [11]
Mandane – Angiola Perini, soprano
Semira – Maria Anna Cavalli, soprano
Artabano – Gustavo Lazzarini, tenor
Megabise – Giovanni Bendazzi, bass

On the same evening the ballet Ezio e Fulvia was given, choreography and music by Carlo Augusto Favier.
Sources. MS in Italy.
Senza Mirarmi in Volto. Duet, Arbace-Artabano. Biblioteca Academia di S. Cecilia, Rome. A-Ms-3035. Orchestra – 2 oboes, bassoon, 2 horns, strings and continuo.
Per quel Paterno Amplesso. Aria in E flat. Biblioteca Palatina, Parma, Italy. Sanvitale. Sanv. A. 140 – CF. II. 5. Orchestra – 2 clarinets, bassoon, 2 horns, strings with divided violas.

4.

Rinaldo d'Asti

Opera, Italian
Libretto: Giuseppe Carpane after Jean-Baptiste Radet and Pierre-Yves Barré: *Renaud d'Ast*.
Possibly Comedy in One Act
Premiere Malta Teatro Manoel, 1796

5.

Il Barbiere di Siviglia

Opera Buffa, Italian, Three Acts

[11] (Martini 1761-1824). Not to be confused with the earlier castrato Francesco Bernardi (1686-1758) also called Senesino after the place of his birth, Siena.

Libretto: Giuseppe Petrosellini after Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais
Premiere Malta Teatro Manoel 1796

6.

Il bottaio

Opera Buffa, Italian, One Act
Librettist?
Premiere possibly Malta Teatro Manoel 1796-7

Later revised as Le tonnelier
Premiere Paris 17th May 1801 (see Le tonnelier, No. 13)

7.

L'improvisata in campagna

Opera Buffa, Italian, One Act
Libretto: after Etienne Joseph Bernard Delrieu [ca1760-1836]
Premiere Malta Teatro Manoel 1797

Later revised as L'impromptu de campagne
Première Paris 30 June 1801 (see L'impromptu de campagne, No. 14)

8.

I due avari

Commedie per musica – opera buffa, Italian, Two Acts
Libretto: after Moliere, *Les deux Avares*. Charles Georges Fenouillot de Falbaire
Premiere possibly Malta Teatro Manoel Winter 1797

9.

Ginevra di Scozia

Dramma serio eroico, Italian, Two Acts
Libretto: Gaetano Rossi
Premiere possibly Malta Teatro Manoel 1798

10.

Il barone d'Alba chiara

Commedia per musica, Italian, Two Acts
Libretto : unknown

Premiere Malta Teatro Manoel Carnevale 1798

11.

Le Petit Page ou La Prison d'état.

Comédie mêlée d'ariettes, French, One Act.
Libretto: René-Charles Guilbert de Pixerécourt and L.-T. Lambert
Première Théâtre Feydeau 14 or 15 February 1801
Collaboration with Rodolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831)
Published. Paris: au Magasin de Musique. Publishers plate No. 268

12.

Flaminius à Corinthe

Opera, French, One Act
Libretto: René-Charles Guilbert De Pixerécourt and T.-L. Lambert
Premiere Opéra 27th February 1801
Collaboration with Rodolphe Kreutzer (1766-1831)

Sources MS Full score. Bibliothèque-Musée de l'Opéra, A-377 (1-2).
Overture Edition Richard Divall

13.

Le tonnelier

Opéra-comique, French, One Act
Libretto: Etienne Joseph Bernard Delrieu (c. 1760-1836) and Antoine François Quétant
Première Théâtre Feydeau 19th May 1801[12]

14.

L'impromptu de campagne

Opéra-comique French One Act
Libretto: Etienne Joseph Bernard Delrieu (c. 1760-1836)
Premiere Théâtre-Favart 30th June 1801
Full score Bibliothèque - Musée de l'Opéra, Paris.
Publisher. Paris: chez Pleyel. Publishers plate No. 475

This opéra-comique is a French adaptation and version of the Italian opera *L'improvvisata in campagna*. Letellier comments on the attractive overture, on the qualities of several of the

[12] *Azzopardi* gives the date of the premiere as 17 May 1801.

arias, the sextet and the 'developed finale'.[13] The work is dedicated to Isouard's father, Fortunato.

15.

La Statue ou La Femme avare

Opéra-comique, French, One Act
Libretto: François Benoît Hoffmann (1760-1828)
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 26 April 1802

16.

Michel-Ange

Opéra-comique, French, One Act
Libretto: Étienne-Joseph-Bernard Delrieu (c. 1760-1836)
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 11 December 1802
Publisher. Paris : chez Cherubini etc. Publishers plate No. 61[14]

The cast in the first performance were:
Michel-Ange – M. Elleviou
Scopa – M. Chénard
Pasquino – M. Dozainville
Fiorina – Mme. Scio-Messié
Zerbine – Mme. St-Aubin

Also performed in French, Ghent 1802, Brussels 28 March 1803
Hamburg Summer 1803, Brunswick Spring 1803, Hanover 3 July 1805

In Dutch, (translated by C. Vreedenberg) Amsterdam 1803

In German, (translated by C. A. Herklots) Munich 1803, Vienna Theater in der Leopoldstadt 1 June 1804, Berlin 21 January 1805, revived Mannheim 28 June 1835

In Spanish, Madrid 13 June 1804

In Polish, (translated by L. A. Dmuszewski) Warsaw 1812

In Danish, (translated by N. T. Brunn) Copenhagen 1820

[13] Robert Ignatius Letellier, *Opéra-Comique – A Source Book –Composers and Their Works at the Opéra-Comique 1762-1915* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 438.
[14] Paris: chez Cherubini, Méhul, Kreutzer, Rode, N. Isouard et Boieldieu.

Set in Florence, the opera is not about the life of the Italian sculptor and artist Michelangelo, but rather the hero, Michelangelo, is enamoured of Fiorina, daughter of Pérgin. He in turn is a pupil of the art teacher Scopa, whose paintings are derided in Florence.

This was the first of Isouard's French operas to have been a complete success, although it met with some criticism, as printed in the report on the work's failure in Lyon.[15]

> Although Paris may hold the sole privilege of producing good works, it shares occasionally with the provinces the ill fate of producing some very bad ones.....New operas are brought to the provincial theatres without any preparation. In Paris, they receive favourable support, but in the *départements* only the truth is on their side. Without support or recommendations, they are presented to a silent public, like a foreigner to a tribunal.[16]

Michel-Ange was dedicated by Isouard 'a son Ami Gérard - Peintre'.
Overture Edition Richard Divall

17.

Les confidences

Opéra-comique, French, Two Acts
Libretto: Antoine Gabriel Jars [(not by F. B. Hoffmann as some texts cite).
Premiere Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 31 March 1803
Publisher. Paris: au Magasin de Musique, chez Cherubini etc. Publishers plate No. 145

The cast in the first season were:
Dorimond – M. Chenard
Lucile – Mme. Pingenet
Solange – M. Gavaudan
Floricour – M. Elleviou
Mérival – M. Martin
Lisette – Mme. St Aubin

Also performed in French, Brussels 2 October 1803, Hamburg 1804, Berne 5 March 1805

In German, Vienna as *Die Verschslungen*, (translated by M. G. Lambrecht) 23 July 1805:
Berlin as *Die vertrauten Nebenbuhler*, (translated by C. A. Herklots) 24 September 1805

In Spanish, (translated by F. Enciso Castrillon) Madrid 16 January 1805

In Danish, (translated by N. T. Bruun) Copenhagen 14 May 1805

In Polish, (translated by K. Brodzinski) Warsaw 1816

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[15] Bulletin de Lyon.19 February 1803, – 30 *Pluviôse* year XI.
[16] Jean Mongrédien, *French Music from the Enlightenment to Romanticism 1789-1830*. Translated by Sylvain Frémaux. (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1996), 141.

This work had some success and the dialogue has been described as 'rapid and witty'.[17] The opera is dedicated to Madame Eliza Elleviou, possibly the wife of the famous singer at the Opéra-Comique, Jean Elleviou (1769-1842) who appeared in the role of Floricour in the premiere.
Overture Edition Richard Divall

18.

Le baiser et la quittance ou Une aventure de garnison

Opéra-comique, French, Three Acts
Musical collaboration with Etienne Méhul, François-Adrien Boieldieu and Rodolphe Kreutzer
Libretto: Louis Benoît Picard, Michel Dieulafoy & Charles de Longchamps
Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 18 June 1803

Sources : Paris Bibliothèque National and Brussels Conservatoire Royale de Musique

19.

Le Médecin turc

Opéra-bouffon, French, One Act
Libretto: Pierre-Antoine-Jean-Baptiste Villiers and Armand Gouffé
Premiere Opera Comique (Feydeau) 15 November 1803
(Some sources give the premiere date as 19 November 1803)[18]
Performed in repertoire at the Opéra-Comique until 1827
Publisher. Paris: au Magasin de Musique, chez Cherubini etc. Publishers plate No. 238

The cast in the first performance were:
Kalil – M. Solié
Forlis – M. Elleviou
Adele – Mlle. Pingenet aînée
Bouzoula – Mme. Dugazon
Chef des Gardes – M. Prévot

Also performed in French, Brussels 21 February 1804, Brunswick 11 June 1804,
Moscow 16 May 1807, Berne 15 July 1809, Sydney 11 April 1839 by the Minard Company from Batavia in the Dutch East Indies

In German, Vienna Kärntnertor-Theater May 1804, Frankfurt September 1805

In Spanish, (translated by F. Enciso Castrillon) Madrid 14 October 1804

In Russian, (translated by A. V. Luknitsky) St. Petersburg 19 November 1810

[17] Letellier, .440.
[18] *Azzopardi*, 83.

In Polish, (translated by L. A. Dmuszewski) Warsaw 1816

This work, composed in the popular Turkish fashion of the era, and the overture is in the form of a Turkish march, utilising percussion of cymbals and triangle.[19] The plot, set in Constantinople has echoes of Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio* and *Zaide*, and is a descendant of the first *Entrée, Le Turc généreux* in Rameau's *Ballet Héroïque, Les Indes Galantes* (1735). It was also one of the first of Isouard's scores to be published by a combine of composer-investors that included Cherubini, Méhul, Kreutzer, Isouard and his rival Boieldieu. The work is dedicated to Madame Louis Bonaparte, Hortense de Beauharnais, later for a time, the Queen of Holland.
Overture Edition Richard Divall

20.

L 'intrigue aux fenêtres

Opéra-buffon, French One Act
Libretto: Jean-Nicolas Bouilly and Emmanuel Félicite Charles Mercier Dupaty
Premiere Opéra-Comique (Salle Favart) 24 or 25 February 1805[20]
Performed in repertoire at the Opéra-Comique until 1827
Published. Paris: au Magasin de Musique, Cherubini etc. Publishers plate No. 385

Also performed in French, Brussels 24 June 1805

In German, (translated by G. F. Treitschke) Frankfurt 16 September 1805,
Vienna 17 January 1806, (translated by Haug) Stuttgart May 1806, (translated by K. Reinhard) Munich 1806, Berlin (Treitsche) 16 April 1807 (with additions by F. L. Seidel and B. A. Weber], etc. Last revived in Germany in 1832

In Spanish, (translated by F. Enciso Castrillon) Madrid 14 October 1805

In Russian, (translated by A. V. Luknitsky) St. Petersburg 7 June 1807

In Polish, (translated by L. Osinski) Warsaw 1807

In Swedish, (translated by C. G. Nordforss) Stockholm 25 November 1807

In Danish, (translated by N. T. Bruun) Copenhagen 1 October 1813

Dutch translation by C. A. Van Raij published 1812

The opera was dedicated: *'à son altesse Serenissime Monseigneur Le Prince Murat'*. Here Isouard was clearly aligning himself with the Napoleonic regime and trying to gain official support from members of the ruling family. Murat, who had married Napoleon's sister

[19] This delightful overture has been edited by Richard Divall.
[20] *Azzopardi* gives the date as 25 February 1805.

Caroline, was crowned King of Naples and Sicily in 1808. He had taken part in the Egyptian campaign, and his life ended when he was shot by a Neapolitan firing squad on 13 October 1815.

21.

La ruse inutile ou Les rivaux par convention

Opéra-comique, French, Two Acts
Libretto: François-Benoît Hoffmann
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 30 May 1805
Published. Paris: au Magasin de Music Cherubini etc. Publishers plate No. 407

22.

Léonce ou Le Fils adoptif

Comédie, French, Two Acts
Libretto: Benoît-Joseph Marsollier de Vivetiers
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 18 November 1805
Published. Paris: J.M. Bault. Publishers plate No. 432.

The first cast were:
Dormeuil – M. Solié
Léonge – M. Gavaudan
Clairine – Mme Gavaudan
Germain – M. Juliet
François – M. Lesage [21]
Justin – M. Chenard

This opera captured the imagination of audiences of the time, both for the charm and elegance of the music, and the strength of the libretto by Marsollier. The aria for the character Daniel, *L'hymen est un lien* where the character accompanied himself on the lyre or guitar became very popular. This work was dedicated *'à son ami Rodolphe Kreutzer'*.

23.

La Prise de Passaw

Opéra-comique, French Two or Three Acts[22]
Libretto : Emmanuel Felicite Charles Mercier Dupaty
Première Opéra-Comique 8 February 1806

24.

[21] The spelling of the name of this singer is either printed as Lasage or Le Sage.
[22] *Azzopardi* cites the work being in two acts and *The New Grove* in two or three acts.

Le Déjeuner de Garçons

Comédie mêlée d'ariettes, French, One Act
Libretto: Auguste François Creuzé de Lesser (1771-1839)
Premiere Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 24 April 1805
Published. Paris: au Magasin de Music Cherubini etc. Publishers plate No. 457

The cast in the premiere were:
Valcour – M. Gavaudan
Linval – M. Martin
Germond – M. Solié
D'Alban – M Chenard
Madame D'Alville – Mme Moreau
Dupré – M. Moreau

Also performed in French, Brussels 19 November 1806

In Danish, (translated by N. T. Bruun) Copenhagen 6 November 1809

In German, (translated by C. Al Herklots) Berlin 25 June 1813

In Russian, (translated by I. I. Valberkh) St, Petersburg 21 November 1814, Moscow 14 December 1815

The plot for this short work is after the comedy by Noël de Breton, sieur de Hauteroche, *Le Souper mal apprété*. There were only six performances.[23] The work is dedicated to 'CCC' Overture Edition Richard Divall

25.

Idala ou La Sultane

Opéra -comique, French, Three Acts
Libretto: François Benoît Hoffmann [1760-1828]
Premiere Opéra-Comique 30 July or 1 August 1806[24]

This work was written for a benefit and there were only two performances. Both the libretto and the score have not been found.

26.

Les rendez-vous bourgeois

Opéra-bouffon, French, One Act[25]

[23] The work is not listed in either *The New Groves* or *Azzopardi*.
[24] Letellier cites the work as being in one act, 442. Azzopardi gives the premiere as 30 July 1806.
[25] The work is described in Letellier as an *Opéra-comique*, 442. *Azzopard*i, 84.

Libretto: François Benoît Hoffmann (1760-1828)
Premiere Opéra-Comique 9 May 1807
Last revived at the Opéra-comique in 1897
Published. Paris: au Magasin de Musique, 1807. Publisher's plate No. 527
Vocal Score published by G. Brandus, Paris; and 'nouvelle edition' by G. Brandus & S. Dufour, Paris.
Republished Nabu Public Domain Reprints USA 2010

The cast in the premiere season were:
Dugravier – M. Juliet
Reine – Mlle. Pelet
Louise – Mme. Moreau
César – M. Huet
Charles – M. Paul
Julie – Mme. St Aubin
Bertrand – M. Lesage [Le Sage]
Jasmine – M. Moreau

Also performed in French, Brussels 9 August 1807, Berne 10 June 1809, Brunswick 1810, Moscow 1 December 1810, Vienna 18 August 1826, New York 25 July 1827, Berlin 7 June 1828, London St. James theatre 20 June 1836, Turin April 1858, Barcelona 1869

In German, (as *Alle fuerchten sich*, translated by I. F. Castelli) Vienna Theater auf der Wien 30 March 1808, (as *Das Krahwinkler Rendez-vous*, translated by H. G. Schmieder) St. Petersburg 1810, (as *Die Hasen in der Hasenheide*, translated by L. Angely) Berlin Koenigsstadtisches Theater 5 March 1827, Vienna Carl-Theater 21 April 1861, (as *Das Landhaus am Walde oder Einer fuerchtet sich von der Anderen*, translated by H. Zunz) Stuttgart c. February 1828, (as Das Stelldichein, translated by K. Blum) Berlin Königliches Opernhaus

In Russian, (translated by Y. I. Lizogub) St Petersburg 4 June 1810; Moscow 15 December 1817

In Swedish, (translated by C. G. Nordforss) Stockholm 7 February 1814

In Dutch, (translated by M. G. Engelmann) Amsterdam 1818 and The Hague 1820

In Polish, (translated by L Matuszynski) Warsaw 27 June 1821 (revived c. 1860, with additional music by Stanislaw Moniuszko)

The work is one of Isouard's strongest scores, and the overture is very fine. It survived in the repertoire of the Opéra-Comique for ninety years, and the vocal writing and the orchestration are assured. The libretto by Hoffmann is regarded as his best. The opera is dedicated to Madame de St Aubin (Stéphanie de Genlis de St Aubin), the writer and poet.

27.

Les Créanciers, ou Le Remède à la goutte

Opéra-comique, French, Three Acts[26]
Libretto: Jean-Baptiste-Charles Vial
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 10 December 1807

28.

Un jour à Paris, ou La Leçon singulière

Opéra-comique, French, Three Acts
Libretto: Charles-Guillaume Étienne [1775-1845]
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 24 May 1808
Last revived at the Opéra-Comique in 1826
Published. Paris: au Magasin de Musique, Cherubini etc. Publishers plate No. 16 [27]

The first cast were:
Ferval – M. Solié
St.-Romain – M. Paul
Armand – M Elleviou
Pauline – Mme. Duret
Labrie – M. Martin
Addré – M. Lesage
with M. Prévost and M. Darancourt

Also performed in French, Brussels 23 November 1808, Hamburg 14 December 1809, Cassel Spring 1811, Rudolstadt 1811

In German, (translated by C. A. Herklots) Berlin 20 March 1809, Vienna Theater an der Wien 20 November 1811 with additions by Ignaz Xavier Ritter Von Seyfried (1776-1841), Riga 1822, Graz 1827

This opera was dedicated to Monsieur (Auguste Laurent) de Rémusat, a chamberlain to the Emperor Napoleon. His son Charles, as Minister of the Interior in 1840, commissioned Hector Berlioz to write his monumental *Symphonie Triomphale et Funebre*.

29.

Cimarosa

Opéra-comique, French, Two Acts
Libretto: Jean-Nicolas Bouilly
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 28 June 1808
Published. Paris: chez Bochsa, père. Publishers plate No. 32.[28]

[26] Letellier describes the work as an *Opéra-bouffon*.
[27] *Azzopardi* cites the plate numbers as '16', but this number is possibly incorrect.

The cast in the premiere season were:
Cimarosa – M. Martin
Modestini – M. Le Sage
Fiorelli – M. Chenard
Florina – Mme. Duret
Ambrogio – M. Juliet
Casacciello – M. Darancourt[29]
Trabulza – M. Prévost
Orsolina – Mlle. Aglaé Gadauvan
Bellini – Mlle. Duval
Un Officer de justice – M. St Aubin

30.

Zélomir, ou L'Intrigue au sérail

Opéra-comique, French, Three Acts
Libretto: Charles-Guillaume Étienne [1777-1845]
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 25 April 1809

Only three performances were given of the work.

31.

Cendrillon

Opéra-féerie French Three Acts[30]
Libretto: Charles-Guillaume Étienne (1775-1845), after Charles Perrault *Contes de ma mère l'oye*
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 22 February 1810
Last revived Opéra-Comique 23 January 1877
Published. Paris: chez l'Auteur, Rue des Colonnes, No. 4. Publishers plate No. 91 [31]
Vocal Score published by Chez. E. Troupenas, Paris
Reprinted by Nabu Public Domain Reprints USA 2010

The cast in the premeire season were:
Ramir – M. Paul
Alidor – M. Solié
Dandini – M. Le Sage

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[28] Charles or Karl Bochsa, father of the harpist, Nicholas Charles Bochsa, was a well-known musician and publisher in Paris. He was one of the witnesses on the list of the composer's assets compiled after Isouard's death.
[29] It is interesting to note the presence of the character of the Neapolitan comedian Casacciello in this opera. The character had been the subject of Isouard's first opera in this catalogue.
[30] Letellier terms the work as an *Opéra-comique*, 444
[31] *Azzopardi*, 84.

Montefascione – M. Juliet
Clorinde – Mme. Duret
Tisbé – Mlle. Regnault
Cendrillon – Mlle. St Aubin.

Also performed in French, Brussels 13 June 1810, Moscow 27 may 1811, New York 13 July 1827

In German, (translated by H. Schmidt) Eisenstädt, Hungary 9 September 1810, Frankfurt 1 January 1811, Vienna Theater an der Wien 2 April 1811, (translated by C. A. Herklots) Berlin 14 June 1811, Hamburg 26 February 1812, (translated by F. E. Jester as *Prinzessin Aschenbrödel*) Königsberg 1812, Budapest 13 February 1812, Berne 4 April 1812, Prague 1 January 1814, Helsinki 22 January 1822

In Swedish, (translated by C. G. Nordforss) 23 February 1823

In Polish, (translated by W. Pekalski) Warsaw 1811

In Dutch, (translated by C. A. Van Raij) Amsterdam 1812

In Spanish, Madrid 9 January 1815

In Hungarian (translated by F. S. Deáky) Clausenburg 26 July 1824

This enchanting opera has recently been revived and recorded in St Petersburg by the Australian conductor Richard Bonynge. It has some glittering orchestration and the vocal writing for the two ugly sisters, Clorinde and Tisbe is full of coloratura, whilst the role of Cendrillon is simplicity. This simplicity is the key ingredient in the opera, together with the mastery in the writing of the many ensembles. It was written for seven soloists and full chorus. The opera was later revised and 'improved' by the composer Adolphe Adam (1803-1856). Cendrillon was dedicated to Mademoiselle Alexandrine de St Aubin.[32]
Overture Edition Richard Divall

32.

La Victime des arts, ou La Fête de famille.[33]

Opéra-comique, French Two Acts
Collaboration with Jean-Pierre Solié (1755-1812) and Henri Montan Berton (1767-1844)
Libretto: Louise-Marie d'Estourmel
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau), 27 February 1811

This joint collaboration with Isouard received only one performance.

33.

[32] *Ibid*. 84.
[33] *Azzopardi*, 84 cites a further subtitle for the work as *L'Heureux Militaire*.

La Fête au village ou l'Heureux Militaire

Opéra-comique, French, One Act
Libretto: Charles-Guillaume Étienne (1777-1845)
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 31 March 1811

34.

Le Billet de loterie

Opéra-comique, French, One Act
Libretto: Augustin François Creuzé de Lesser (1771-1839) and Jean-François Roger
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 14 September 1811
Published. Paris: chez Nicolo Auteur, Rue des Colonnes, No. 4. Publisher's plate No.56
Vocal Score published by G. Brandus & S. Dufour, Paris, and later by Chez E. Troupenas.
Vocal score published in German as 'Das Lotterieloos' by Bartholf Senff, Leipzig.
Reprinted by Nabu Public Domain Reprints USA 2010.

The first cast were:
Adèle – Mme. St Aubin
Betty – Mme. Gavaudan
M. de Plinville – M. Gavaudan
Jackson – M. Juliet

Also performed in French, Liége 21 December 1811, Brussels 25 January 1812, Cassel 25 April 1812, and New Orleans 1816 etc.

In German, (translated by I. F. Castelli) Vienna 5 February 1812, Prague 21 November 1812, Weimar 21 December 1814, Berlin 19 March 1817 (translated by C. A. Herklots) and given there until 1850, Munich 1822

In Polish, Lemberg 11 March 1859

In Dutch, Amsterdam June 1929

This short work of nine movements, including an overture enjoyed considerable success and was printed in a German version. The aria for the soprano Adele became a favourite concert piece in France and Germany. This short, but successful work was dedicated to Madame Durel.[34]
Overture Edition Richard Divall

35.

Le Magicien sans magie

[34] *Azzopardi*, 84, and the title page of the orchestral score.

Opéra-comique, French, Two Acts
Libretto: Augustin François Creuzé de Lesser (1771-1839) and Jean-François Roger
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 4 November 1811
The work lasted in the repertory of the Opéra-Comique until 1821.
Published. Paris: chez Bochsa. No publishers plate number.
On the full score the words are by MM

The first cast were:
Le Marquis Aliprandi – M. Paul
Ordicaldo – M. Martin
Mme Lucinde – Mlle. Desbrosses
Hortense – Mme. St Aubin
Fanchette – Mme. Cavaudan
Téobald – M. Darancourt
Richard – M. Rolland

Also performed in French, Brussels 27 February 1812, Cassel Summer 1812.

In German, Vienna Theater an der Wien 22 April 1812

In Dutch, (translated by B. A. Fallee and C. A. Van Raij) Amsterdam 1813

In Polish, (translated by W. Boguslawski) Warsaw 1819

In Russian, (translated by D. N. Barkov) St. Petersburg 24 July 1820, Moscow 8 February 1822

In English (translated by W. H. Hamilton) Dublin 1 March 1815
Overture Edition Richard Divall

36.

Lully et Quinault, ou Le Déjeuner impossible

Opéra-comique, French, One Act
Libretto: P-Charles Gaurigan-Nanteuil
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 27 February 1812
The work remained in the repertory of the Opéra-Comique until 1833
Published. Paris: chez Bochsa. No plate number

The cast in the premiere were:
Lully – M. Martin
Quinault – M. Paul
de la Bouquiniére – Mlle. Desbrosses
Eugénie – Mme. Duret
Victor – Mme. Gavaudan

Sansonnet – M. Juliet
Laurette – Mme. St Aubin

Also performed in French, Brussels 31 may 1812, Cassel Summer 1812, New Orleans before 1825, Vienna 18 July 1826, New York 1 September 1827

In German, (translated by J. Von Seyfried) Vienna Theater an der Wien 25 September 1813

In Polish, (translated by B. Kudlicz) Warsaw 1814

In Danish, (translated by N. T. Bruun) Copenhagen 5 September 1820

In Swedish, (translated by L. E. Granberg and further composed by Berens) Stockholm 15 November 1859
'*Ouverture en Symphonie Concertante pour Flûte, Clarinette, Hautbois, Cors et Basson*'. Edition Richard Divall

37.

Le Prince de Catane ou Alamon.

Opéra, French, Three Acts [35]
Libretto: René-Richard Louis Castel (1758-1832), after Voltaire's poem of 1763, '*L'Éducation d'un prince'.* The work was adapted into an *opéra-comique* libretto by Voltaire, his second essay in this field, as *Le baron d'Otrante* and presented to Grétry in 1768, but remained unset to music by that composer.
Première Opéra-Comique 4 March 1813. There was a season of eighteen performances.
Published. Paris: chez Bochsa. Publisher's plate No. 400

The cast in the premiere season were:
Alamon – M. Paul
Emon – M. Darancourt
Abdala – M. Chenard
Sifredi – M. Le Sage [Lesage]
Génaro – M. Juliet
Hussem – M. Théodore
Un Ecuyer – M. Allair
Amide – Mme Boulanger

Also performed in French, Brussels 7 July 1814 etc

In German, (translated by J. Von Seyfried) Vienna Theater an der Wien 10 December 1813, Prague 12 June 1814, Budapest 19 June 1815, Graz 4 November 1826

In Spanish, Madrid 2 August 1817

[35] Letelllier and *Azzopardi* cite the work as an *Opéra-comique*. The libretto, published by Chez Fages in 1813 describes the work as an *Opéra en Trois Actes*.

In Russian, (translated by A. I. Sheller) St Petersburg 2 October 1817

This is a full scale work for eight soloists, several *comprimario* roles as well as *Coryphées* from the chorus, plus full chorus and ballet. It is one of Isouard's rare historical works, set in Catania on Sicily in the thirteenth century. The work has Turkish choruses and the final chorus includes the words that would have resonated in France in 1813, and they are:

Au champ d'honneur cherchons la gloire.
Et nous recevrons en retour
Le prix qu'on doit à la victoire,
Offert par les mains de l'amour.[36]

The opera was dedicated by the composer *'à S. t. Monseigneur le Comte de Ségur'*. Louis-Philippe de Ségur (1753-1830), was a diplomat and later member of the Council of State under the Emperor Napoleon. As a senator he was also grand master of ceremonies to the Emperor, but later reconciled to the Bourbon Louis XVIII.
Overture Edition Richard Divall

38.

Le française à Venise [37]

Opéra-comique, French, One Act
Libretto: Justin Gensoul
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 14 June 1813
The initial season of this work ran into the following year
Published. Paris: chez Bochsa. No plate number is cited
This short work is dedicated 'à son Ami Placide Boue'[38]

The cast of the first season were:
St Elme – M. Paul
Dona Maria – Mme. Paul-Michu
Dona Elvire – Mme. Belmont
Don Félix – M. Darancourt
Rosine – Mme. Boulanger

Overture Edition Richard Divall

39.

Bayard à Mézières ou Le Siège de Mézières

[36] 'Seek glory on the field of honour. And we in return receive the price that should be at the victory, offered by the hands of love'. Printed libretto.
[37] Letellier gives the title as Le Française à Venise. *Azzopardi* as 'Venice'.
[38] This dedication might refer to the Parisian jeweller and author Placide Boue.

Opéra-comique, French, One Act
Collaboration with Charles-Simon Catel (1773-1830), Luigi Cherubini and Boieldieu
Libretto: Emmanuel Félicite Charles Mercier Dupaty and René-André-Polydore Allisan de Chazet
Première Opéra-Comique 12 February 1814
Published. Paris: Chez Boieldieu Jeune, Marchand de Musique, Rue de Richelieu No. 76

The cast in the premiere season were:
Bayard – M. Gavaudan
D'Hannebaut – M. Paul
Montmorency – M. Panchard
Monmoreau – M. Chenard
Rèculin de Pont-a-Mousson - M. Martin
Le Page de Bayard – Mlle. Regnault
La Comtesse de Sancerre - Mme. Duret
La Comtesse de Tavannes – Mme. Belmont
Fanchette – Mme. Gavaudan
Philippe – Mme. Boulanger

'After the many ventures of the Empire's more glorious years the regime was dying. During the Hundred Days period from Napoleon's return to Paris on 20 March 1815 to his second abdication on 22 June, the regime had to turn once again to opera to bolster the morale of the population whose territory was being invaded more and more every day'.[39] Of the ten movements, the overture, listed in the score as being by *Nicolo* is notable, in that there is a stage band of wind, brass and percussion *sur le Théâtre*. Overture Edition Richard Divall.

40.

Joconde ou les Coureurs d'Aventures

Opéra-comique, French, Three Acts
Libretto: Charles-Guillaume Étienne (1777-1845)
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 28 February 1814
Given in Paris until 1918 and Beauvais 1931
Published. Paris: chez Sieber and later by chez E. Troupenas. Publishers plate No. 13.
Vocal Score published by Brandus et Cie, Paris and 'nouvelle edition' published by G. Brandus & S Dufour, Paris
Reprinted by Nabu Public Domain Reprints USA 2010

The cast in the first performance were:
Robert – M. Gavaudan
Joconde – M.Martin
Lysandre – M. Rolland
Le Bailli – M. Lesage
Le Rond – M. Granger

[39] Barbier, Patrick. *Opera in Paris 1800-1850,* Translated by Robert Louma (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1995). 97

Lucas – M. Ganthier
Mathilde – Mme. Paul-Michu
Edile – Mme. Boulanger
Jeanette – Mme. Gavaudan

Also performed in French, Liége 13 December 1814, Brussels 9 January 1815, (revived 1884) Berne 10 February 1819, New York 27 July 1827, Baden-Baden 1 August 1864

In German, (translated by J von Seyfried) Vienna Ausgarten Theater 12 March 1815, and the Kärtnertor-Theater 1 April 1815, Budapest 25 September 1815, Prague 2 January 1816, Munich 5 January 1815, Berlin (translated by J. O. H. Schaum) 26 April 1816, revived Vienna 1855, Munich 2 December 1870

In Polish, (translated by W. Pekalski) Warsaw 1815

In Russian, (translated by P. A. Korsakov) St Petersburg 7 February 1815, Moscow 22 December 1817

In Spanish, Madrid 15 July 1816

In Danish, (translated by N. T. Bruun) Copenhagen 14 October 1817
In Swedish, (translated by C. G. Nordforss) Stockholm 14 January 1820, revived 1858

In Norwegian, Christiana Autumn 1873

In English, (translated by Charles Santley) London Lyceum Theatre-English Opera House 25 October 1876

This opera, written for eight soloists and full chorus was one of Isouard's enduring successes. Letellier writes: 'Joconde is one of the most perfect examples of the genre, displaying lightness, grace and vivacity, with fluent melodic contours and always witty'[40]. It is well written and with a large number of ensembles for two or more voices. It remained in the repertoire of French opera houses for many decades.

The work is dedicated to the Princess Volkonsky.[41] No doubt remembering past patronage, Isouard is cited as a *Donat* of the Order of St John, and this stratagem was part of his attempt to be reaccepted by the *Ancien Regime.*

41.

Jeannot et Colin

Opéra-comique, French, Three Acts

[40] Letelleir. 447.
[41] The dedicatee is the Princess Zanaida Volkonsky, the then mistress of Czar Alexander of Russia. On the title page Isouard describes himself as a '*Donat* of The Order of Malta'. The orchestral score was published after the defeat and exile of Napoleon to Elba, and the return to Paris of the Bourbon, King Louis XVIII of France.

Libretto: Charles-Guillaume Étienne (1777-1845)
Première Opéra-Comique 17 October 1814
Revived Paris 17 June 1850 and 12 October 1857
Published. Paris: chez Bochsa. There are no plate numbers.
Vocal Score published by Brandus et Cie, Paris
Reprinted by Nabu Public Domain Reprints USA 2010

The cast in the premiere was:
Jeannot – M. Martin
Thérèse – Mme. Duret
Colin – M. Gavaudan
Colette – Mme. Gavaudan
La Comtesse – Mme. Boulanger
Le Chevalier Lucival – M. Paul
Blaise – M. Lesage

Also performed in French, Brussels 7 December 1815, New York 10 August 1827

In German, (translated by I. F. Castelli) Vienna 9 November 1815, Brünn 13 August 1817, Breslau 1817, Berlin 3 August 1821

In Polish, (translated by W Boguslawski) Warsaw 1817

In Danish, (translated by N. T. Bruun) Copenhagen 6 October 1818

Together with Joconde, Jeannot et Colin was the Isouard's great success. The majority of the pieces are ensembles and the two finales to the first and second acts are well structured movements, composed with great verve and energy. Of particular note is the duet and trio, number four in the score for the Countess, Thérèse and Jeannot, with its elaborate use of interweaving coloratura and an impressive cadenza for the three solo voices. This opera is dedicated to Monsieur Hyppolite De Lyvri.[42] It was staged at the Manoel Theatre in Valletta, in June 1991.

42.

Les Deux Maris

Opéra-comique, French, One Act
Libretto: Charles Guillaume Etienne (1777-1845)
Première Opéra-Comique 18 March 1816[43]
Published. Paris: chez Bochsa. There are no plate numbers.

The original cast in the premiere were:
Valsain – M. Paul
Sophie – Mme. Gavaudan

[42] The family had given several members to the Order of Malta in the eighteenth century.
[43] The printed libretto gives the date of the premiere as 17 March 1816.

Dorsan – M. Gavaudan
Clémence – Mme. Duret

Also performed in French, Ghent 9 June 1816 etc

In German, (translated by I. F. Castelli) Berlin 8 January 1819, Vienna 30 July 1819
Overture Edition Richard Divall

43.

L'Une pour l'autre ou L'enlèvement

Opéra-comique, French, Three Acts
Libretto: Charles-Guillaume Étienne (1777-1845)
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 11 March 1816
Published. Paris: chez L'Auteur, Rue des Filles St Thomas. Publishers plate No. 23 [44]

The cast in the first season were:
Richard – M. Juliet
Helène – Mlle Palard
Cécile – Mme Boulanger
Gourville – M. Martin
Saint-Albin – M. Paul
Jenneval – M. Huet

Overture Edition Richard Divall

44.

Les deux Capitaines de hussards.

Opéra-comique. French, One Act
Libretto: Joseph Hélitas de Meum and Paul-Auguste Ducis.
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 17 March 1817

There was only one performance.

45.

Aladin ou La lampe merveilleuse

Opéra féerie, French, Five Acts [45]

[44] From this date, Isouard has been reduced to self-publishing from his home address in the Rue de Filles St Thomas. The score is numbered 17 in a series of his own publications. There are detailed instructions for the orchestra in the introduction page to the opera.
[45] Letellier terms the work as an *Opéra en cinq actes*, 449

Posthumous work, further composed by Angelo Maria Benincori (1779-1821) and completed by Francois-Antoine Habeneck (1781-1849)
Libretto : Charles-Guillaume Étienne (1777-1845)
Première Paris Opéra 6 February 1822
Performed at the Opéra 147 times until 1830

Also performed in French, The Hague 1834

Source : Bibliothèque de L'Opéra, Paris
Composer's manuscript score in 5 volumes
Cat. No. : A-465 (1-5) plus separate orchestral parts

Isouard left this opera unfinished at his death in 1818, and an attempt to complete it and mount a production was made by the composer Angelo Maria Benincori. Ha also died before this could be accomplished and the work was finally completed by the composer and distinguished conductor, Francois-Antoine Habeneck. Aladin achieved a considerable success, and the full autograph score of the three collaborators survives. The first performance saw the introduction of gas lighting at the Opéra, and this no doubt made a great contribution to the public success of the work, which was performed no less than one hundred times within three years of the première.

46.

Une Nuit de Gustave Wasa, ou Le Batelier suédois

Opéra-comique, French, Two Acts [46]
Libretto: Constant Leber and Charles-Guillaume Étienne.
2 sketches and one chorus
Completed in 1825 by Ferdinand Gasse (1780-1840)
Première Opéra-Comique (Feydeau) 29 September 1827

The work is set in Sweden near Uppsala, during the time of the war against Denmark in 1521-3, and has a cast of nine soloists as well as a male chorus.

Ferdinand Gasse, the French violinist and composer who completed this work was born in Naples. A violin pupil of Pierre Rode and Rodolphe Kreutzer, he was a violinist in the Paris Opéra orchestra from 1801, and would have known Isouard well. A facsimile of the 1827 printed libretto of this opera has been recently published. The final words of the libretto read of the life that Isouard would have wished.

Chers amis, à la ronde
Célébrons ce beau jour;
Grace au ciel, tout seconde
La valeur et l'amour.

[46] In *The New Grove* this work is described as an opera.

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